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A YOUNG MAN'S LOVE.

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST,

BY KATHERINE KINGSTON FILER.

Have you seen the oak-leaf scarlet gleaming
Bright and red, when Summer's dead?
Have you seen it in the sunshine dreaming,
Trembling to and fro upon the sou' wind's wings, asleep,
Broken from its stem and dropped in waters deep?
Learn a lesson that is taught; be wise—be wise!
A young man's love inconstant is as wanton wind,
A young man's love is vanity of vanities,
Surely, surely!

Have you seen the red rose blushing, blushing,
Dew-besprent and sweet of scent,
In the morning zephyr softly flushing?
Maiden-heart, oh, maiden-heart! see, the wind that wantons nigh,
Shakes the pearly dew off, steals the scent, and hurries by.
Oh, be wise, and learn the lesson that it teaches!
A young man's love is vanity of vanities,
And marreth blossoms fragrant that it reaches,
Surely, surely!

Have you seen sweet maiden-eyes grow sad
With fruitless tears that dim the years?
Seen the lips fade like a flower that once was glad?
Note the silver-seeded thistle down, that gleaming goes
Floating upon each changeful wind that whispering blows.
Learn a lesson—oh ye simple ones! be wise:
A young man's love is blown all ways as thistle down,
A young man's love is vanity of vanities,
Surely, surely!

THE SWAMP OUTLAWS;

OR,

A SECRET OF TWENTY YEARS.

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST,

BY CHARLES MORRIS.

THE STRANGER IS ATTACKED IN THE HOLLOW BY THREE MEN.

CHAPTER I.

THE SORREL HORSE INN.

It was near the close of a fine day in May, a few years ago, that two persons were seated on the porch of a roadside inn, situated in Robeson County, North Carolina. It was an old-fashioned frame edifice, irregularly built, near the commencement of an extensive piece of woodland, which for several miles embraced both sides of the highway. One of these persons was evidently the landlord of the house, and well represented the genuine Boniface, both by his aldermanic proportions and by the jollity of his rubicund visage, his cheeks stained with the hue of red wine, and his eyes sparkling with the genuine intoxication of good humor. His companion was a tall, stalwart specimen of the North Carolinian native. Nature had not been lavish of the line of beauty in framing his countenance, or in laying out the proportions of his figure. The lump of clay used in forming his nose had been too large for her to handle skillfully, and this important feature had thus been left considerably in the rough. In the matter of mouth she had been lavishly generous, and altogether his face resembled a clay model rudely sketched out by an inferior workman, and on which the hand of the artist had not yet been laid. But the face of Solomon Muddle, though often marked with an expression of simplicity, displayed a shrewd look in the eyes and a firm set of the lips that showed there was something in the man more than his ordinary expression betokened, a hidden force which occasion would surely draw to the surface.

We intrude ourselves on these boon companions near the end of a long conversation, with which they had whiled away the summer afternoon.

"Tell you what it is, Joe," said Solomon in continuation of their subject, "she has been drawing back from me lately, and I vow I don't know why. I can show as pretty a wheat field as any man in the old North State, and have a clever account of my own at bank, and I'm consarned if I know what more the girl wants. She has drawn me on with that sort of a double twinkle she has in her feet and her eyes, till she has got my heart-strings tied into hern with a hard knot, and now that the skitty creature knows she's got me fast, she's grown just as cool as a cucumber and as short as pie crust."

"Poh!" said Joe, with a merry glitter in his blue eyes. "If that's all you know about woman nature, Sol, you'd better go bury yourself in the pines, and diet yourself on turpentine. I'd stake my head on it she's drawing you on, and growling to herself cause you won't see that you've got the trump cards in your hand."

"No, no, Joe, I can see further through a milestone than that. Ain't such a fool as that."

"Faith, you are not far from a fool."

"Oh, I give in to that, as long as you think so," said Sol, looking significantly at his companion, with a sense of humor in his glance. "Truth is, lad, I don't want to give her up. But what's a fellow to do with such a flirting, changeable little witch as she is? You don't know what a dance she has led me."

"Well, lead her as crooked a dance back again, and you'll be even with her. You don't know them, Sol, or you'd be easier. Just turn your back on them and let on to be on the back track, and they'll be after you like a hive of bees after a pot of honey. Let me tell you I've had my experience of the sex, and I know their tricks as well as a flatboatman knows a sand bar. If you can't win them on your knees, show them your heels, and you'll soon have them after you."

"It mightn't be a bad plan, I allow. There's Sally Price now, she'd be a good hand to try a flirtation with, and maybe I might draw Nell into my net."

"That's the plan. Go in and win. I'll use my influence in your favor."

"Goodness, no! don't try that. I've had your influence before, Joe. I'll forgive you from any more of it."

The landlord leaned back and laughed with such a breadth of enjoyment that it was evident a joke of magnificent proportions was signified in Sol's hasty disclaimer.

At this moment three men passed the inn, and at once attracted the attention of our brace of friends. They were roughly dressed, swarthy individuals, wearing coarse felt hats, slouched, so as to half conceal their countenances. Each carried a small bundle over his shoulder, on the end of a strong stick, and they walked with a sturdy, swinging tread, that showed them well accustomed to the road. They passed the tavern with averted heads, as if desiring to avoid recognition; but stopped a short distance beyond and seemed to enter into consultation. It ended in one of them walking back to the porch, and presenting an empty flask to the host, with the remark:

"Let's have a pint of old rye, landlord. We've had a dusty tramp and want to wet whistles." The speaker was a large, vigorous-appearing man, as dark-skinned as a mulatto, though with Grecian features. There was a keen, hawk-like glance in his eyes, and a sinister expression of countenance as he fumbled in his pocket as if for change, that strongly attracted Sol's attention.

"Another thing we'd like to know," he continued, as the landlord disappeared within the house, "might this road take us to Lumberton? We's engaged to work thar, and must get thar to-morrow, sure."

"This road will take you there, if you've got ten miles more walk in you."

"Easy that, and ten to boot. We's old tramps, mind." The fellow laughed, with a low grating laugh, that made his hearer shudder. He took the flask from Joe, who had just reappeard, paid him for the liquor, and joined his companion in the road.

The two watched them as they proceeded down the road to where it entered the edge of the woodland.

"I can't say that I'd like to trust them fellows far," said Sol. "That chap looks to me a cross between Indian, nigger, and white man; and his eye looks better used to squinting along a rifle than to watching a spade or hammer. I told them this road would take them to Lumberton in ten miles. I hope it will—but I've got my doubts of it."

"Why, it's good twenty, if it's a mile. What made you tell him that? They're only laborers tramping for work."

"What do laborers want to hide their faces for? You could just catch a glint of that chap's eye—and it went through you like a needle. The big beard that hid half his face, looked more like tow than hair. And what's more, I saw the shape of something like a pistol under his blouse. They're after no good—you may bet on that; and I'm going to take a squint after them."

He ran hastily down the road to where it turned into the forest. There was a long, open vista, where the turnpike ran between two rows of tall pines, whose spreading branches met in places above the road. He was just in time to see the last of the three leaping over the fence into the wood, where the others had preceded him.

He turned on his heel and walked slowly back towards the porch, much debating inwardly as he went.

"Joe Bradly, there's no use talking. There's mischief afoot with them customers. Take my word for it, there'll be something to talk about in Robeson before a week. If there was ever a State's Prison bird on the wing, that man who got the whiskey is one. I've seen the kind afore, and it's not hard to tell them."

"Sol, they call you a simple-minded fellow—and yet you're suspicious as an old fox. What under the sun do you think they're after?"

"No good. I don't know what bad. But they will soon show. There's trouble brewing under that chap's tow whiskers, or I'm no judge of the article."

"Well, I hope they'll keep clear of the Sorrel Horse. I've got a rifle up-stairs there that has a wonderful gift at throwing a bullet—and if one of them got in the way of it, I couldn't answer but he might get hurt."

For an hour longer the two friends sat conversing, till the setting sun was just touching the distant tree tops.

"Well, some, Joe," said Sol, at length, "it's getting close to night, and I've a five mile walk afore me, and through the wood, too, with them tramps hid in it. I must be going. What's more, I want to borrow that rifle of yourn. The safe side is the best."

"You're welcome to it if you think there's any danger. Send it back in the morning. Come in and take a good-night glass, and good luck to you."

The last beams of day were glinting from the topmost branches of the trees, as Sol, with the rifle upon his shoulder, took his way down the road, with a ringing "good-night," and was speedily lost to sight behind the trees. He had been gone about ten minutes when the landlord's attention was attracted by the sound of a horse's hoofs rapidly advancing. In another moment a man mounted on a powerful brown horse, appeared round a bend in the road, and drew up at the door of the inn.

He was a tall, well-dressed, handsome person, with bright black eyes, a fine mouth, half hidden by a luxuriant moustache, and the general aspect of a gentleman. The landlord's curious look showed that the new-comer was a stranger to him.

"Will you be kind enough to inform me," he inquired, "if there is a village in this neighborhood called Burton?"

"You will find it about five miles ahead, on this road. But will you not stop and take supper? Your horse has been hard ridden, and looks as if rest and a handful of hay would do him good."

"No, thank you," said the other with a smile. "I am a hard rider, it is true, but I have only made ten miles. I had some three hours rest at an inn back here on the road. By the way, there were three suspicious characters passed there shortly after I arrived, who acted very strangely on seeing me, and one of whom, a roughly dressed, dark complexioned person, was recognized as a dangerous desperado. Have any such persons passed here within the last five hours or so?"

"Yes, about an hour ago, and I think they are now hidden somewhere in the wood. You had best be on your guard."

"Trust me. I have six bullets at their service if they attack me, as, between you and me, I have reason to fear is their intention. Bring me out a glass of brandy, landlord. It may help my nerves if I meet those fellows."

The stranger waited impatiently till the landlord had reappeared with the liquor, drank a mouthful of it, handed him money in payment, and in a moment was off, riding rapidly down the road.

CHAPTER II.

THE ATTACK.

Though daylight still prevailed in the open country, the gloom of twilight nestled under the thick foliage of the pine forest. The quick clatter of the horse's hoofs echoed strangely through the umbrageous aisles of the wood, and the rider loosened the pistol in his breast-pocket, and darted keen glances to either side, as he pushed rapidly forward into the gathering gloom. Suddenly he came sharply on Solomon, who, warned by the sound, was drawn up erect by the roadside, leaning upon his rifle and vigilantly scanning the corner. The rider checked his steed, and subjected our friend to a quick but keen scrutiny, that took in every detail of his appearance. The wood behind him was also scanned by those quick glances, as if in dread of [illegible] companions to the solitary figure.

"Well, sir, will I pass muster?" said Solomon, somewhat nettled by this investigation.

"No offence, my dear sir," said the other graciously. "You are not the person I feared to see, and I ask your pardon if I have appeared rude to you."

"Then who did you take me for?"

"There are some persons who I have reason to fear mean me harm, and I have been told that they are in this wood. Hence I think it best to be vigilant."

"Three rough, villainous-looking customers, eh?"

The other nodded assent.

"Well, take my advice and get out of this bit of wood as fast as your animal will take you. You had best, though, turn back, and spend the night at the Sorrel Horse. That is, if it's you those fellows are after."

"Not I. I would go through were there a dozen instead of three. Good-night."

In a moment the rider had rounded a bend in the road and was out of sight. Solomon moved after him at a quicker pace, and held his rifle in readiness for instant use, not knowing what danger might lie in advance.

After making another mile the horseman came upon the brink of a sharp declivity, descending abruptly into a hollow, in which could be heard the prattle of a running brook. Here the shadows were thick and dense, so that, though he halted and looked anxiously downward, he could distinguish nothing in the gloom, except the dim, white line of the water.

After a moment's hesitation he gave his horse the spur and dashed downward at a break-neck speed, as if convinced that rapidity was here the best element of safety. As he neared the bottom, a blackish line that had seemed to extend itself across the road was suddenly resolved into the trunk of a fallen tree, that lay stretched from one side of the road to the other, completely blocking up the way.

His immediate and powerful check on the rein threw the horse back on his haunches, and as he recovered himself three figures rushed out of the screen of leaves by the roadside, the foremost vigorously grasping the bridle, while the other two covered the rider with the muzzles of a brace of pistols.

"Halt! or you are a dead man!" cried the foremost of these.

The stranger's decision seemed to have been formed with the rapidity of lightning. Scarcely had the hand of the highwayman touched his horse's rein ere the rider's pistol was out, and a bullet grazed the robber's skull that set him reeling like a drunken man. "That for obstructing the public highway." Spurs were buried in the horse's flanks, and with a furious rush and a rapid bound he rose in the air, and was flying in a mad leap over the fallen tree, ere his amazed foes could advance a step. In the very centre of this wild bound, however, the sharp report of a pistol broke on the air, and the noble animal, struck through the heart, gathered himself up into a convulsed, shuddering heap, and fell headlong, a dead mass, on the other side of the tree. The rider, with the skill of a thorough equestrian, had in an instant disengaged himself from the saddle, and leaped to the ground unhurt, as the horse fell quivering at his feet.

His first impulse was to leap for the wood and bury himself under its dark shadows out of the reach of his foes. But they were too quick for him. With the rapidity of practiced woodsmen, the two unhurt men had leaped through the tree, and stood with presented weapons hindering his retreat, ere he had time to advance a step. Like a lion at bay, he instantly crouched down behind the carcass of his dead horse, and tightly clutching his pistol awaited their next movement. For a moment of painful suspense, the party stood glaring at each other, as if neither inclined to take the initiative.

"What do you want of me?" he exclaimed, at length. "You have been like blood-hounds on my track, all day: and for what? Is it my purse you want? Take it, and let me go."

"We don't want your money," said one of the party, in hoarse tones, but with a pure intonation. The hearer was struck with the idea that the voice was disguised. "You have been warned not to come into these parts. If you won't take the warning you must take the consequences."

"And why should my liberty of travel be abridged? For what reason shall I not go where I wish?"

"I am not here to waste words with you. You have your choice. Go back to where you came from. Leave this part of the country altogether, or—"

"Or what?"

"Or you'll get a bullet through you," said the second of the highwaymen, savagely.

"Not a step will I turn back, though twenty of you stood in the path," said the other, in a tone of fierce determination. "As for shooting, it is a game at which more than one can play, and the man of you who advances a step or raises a hand towards me is a dead man. I will not yield my liberty to any gang of ruffians."

"Fire; there's no use palavering," said one of the ruffians, raising his pistol. He had scarcely done so ere it was struck by a bullet that sent it whirling out of his hand. In an instant the other was covered by the weapon of the man at bay.

"Leave, villain!" he cried fiercely. "I give you three seconds' grace. If you are there at the end of that time you will try the virtue of an aim that seldom fails."

But an unexpected danger threatened the speaker. The man who had been left in the road behind, stunned by a shot, had now recovered, and was stealthily advancing on the other side of the tree.

"Fire!" cried the man in front, who faced him, and saw his advance.

The beleagured man half rose and hastily glanced back, and saw the savage, glaring countenance of the ruffian, and the glitter of his presented weapon.

"Hold, you infernal hound!" roared out at this instant a tremendous voice from behind.

At the same moment the murderous villain fired, his aim somewhat disconcerted by this sudden interruption; but the gentleman, evidently badly hurt, reeled and fell prostrate on the body of his dead horse.

Almost simultaneously the sharp crack of a rifle was heard, and the ruffian, with a cry of pain, bounded upward and fell writhing on the ground. His comrades, in evident dread of this reinforcement, instantly leaped forward, grasped him in their arms, and rushed into the woods with their bleeding burden. In the next moment Solomon Muddle appeared on the scene, and leveling his reloaded rifle, sent another shot whistling through the wood, lending wings to their flight.

"Well, here's a go! The horse stone dead, and the man, too, I'm afraid. Thank the Lord, I pickled one of the hounds. This tree didn't lay here this morning. They've cut it down, sure as preaching, to help their game. Lucky I come up when I did, for I see the man ain't dead."

The wounded man was making an effort to rise to his feet as Solomon came to his assistance. The effort caused a free flow of blood from his side.

"Got it here, eh?" said Solomon. "Think it's deep? Does it weaken you much?"

"I can't tell," said the gentleman, sinking back again on his horse.

Solomon at once proceeded to examine the wound, and to bandage it as well as he was able. It appeared to be but a flesh wound, but the flow of blood had been great, and the impromptu surgeon had difficulty in stopping this dangerous tide.

"There, I think that will do, for awhile anyhow," he said at length. "Do you think you can walk half a mile or so, leaning on me? Them fellows may take it in their heads to come back and finish their work, or I'd leave you here while I went for help."

The gentleman with an effort rose to his feet, leaning heavily on his stalwart companion. After a few wild steps a portion of strength appeared to return to him, and they proceeded slowly from the scene of conflict, Solomon sustaining the wounded man with all his tenderness and strength. A short distance up the opposite slope of the hill brought them beyond the boundaries of the forest, and here, in the open country, the summer twilight was yet so strong that it seemed full day as compared with the shadowy gloom of the scene they had left. With slow steps they proceeded onward down the road, which was here lined on either side with fields of golden ripe wheat.

Half an hour's walk, at their slow pace, brought them in sight of a pretty cottage, standing slightly back from the roadside; while at some distance beyond it appeared the roofs of several buildings, grouped together into a small hamlet. As they drew nearer, they perceived that the cottage was beautifully festooned with climbing vines, from which peeped out red gleams of roses, lending a double charm to the scene.

The wounded man leaned more and more heavily on his companion. Solomon examined the bandage and found that it had slipped, and that the wound was again bleeding profusely.

"Come," he said, reflectively, "there's no use trying to reach the village. I'll have to try Nell. She'll be glad enough to give this poor fellow shelter till we can get him on his feet again."

A young lady, who was seated on a trellised porch, in front of the cottage, rose hastily as they stopped at the open gate, and tripped lightly forward to meet them.

"Why, Solomon," she exclaimed laughingly, "have you had a return of your ancient wisdom, and concluded—But, excuse me, I did not observe your friend. Has he met with an accident? He is bleeding!"

"Yes, a bad one. And you'll have to lend him your house for a few days at least. It will not be safe to go further with this wound."

"Go further! I hope you did not think of it. Quick! bring the gentleman in. I will have everything prepared instantly." And with bird-like flight she preceded them into the house, where her voice could be heard in rapid directions.

Feeble as the stranger had become from loss of blood, there was some element in the musical intonations of her voice that seemed to touch a responsive chord deep within him. He listened with half-parted, smiling lips, and, as if gaining strength from the emotion, walked into the house with double the vigor he had before displayed. This sudden strength was succeeded by as sudden a prostration, and he sunk on the couch prepared for him in a partly insensible state.

"Who is he, Solomon? And what has happened?"

"Don't know who he is, and haven't time now to say what's the matter," Solomon shortly answered, as he busied himself about the wound. "We must have a doctor at once. Send for one, Nell, that's a kind soul. I must stay here and try and stop this bleeding."

The lady instantly left the room, and her voice was heard outside despatching a domestic, with abundant charges of rapidity, after the village physician. Ere she returned, the unskillful but kind hands of the impromptu surgeon had succeeded in stopping the flow of blood. The patient lay, with closed eyes, in a state of apparent insensibility.

"There, now, if the bullet's not in him, I guess he'll be all right."

"The what? The bullet!" cried the lady, who entered at this moment, in tones of rapidly ascending pitch. "What, Sol—and you have a rifle! It's an accident! It must be! You did not shoot him knowingly?"

"I shoot him!" replied Solomon, in a voice whose surprise suddenly changed to amusement, and he burst into a roar of laughter. "Why, Nell Brown, you crazy, willful, abominable little ninny, do I look like a highwayman? I shoot him! And, as if the thought afforded him infinite amusement, his laughter broke forth again in a more violent peal than before.

"If you don't stop laughing this instant, I'll—I don't know what I'll do. But I want to know all about it, and you do nothing but stand there and laugh at me." And the petulant creature looked as if she was ready to cry.

"There, there, Nell you know I can't help it. He's doing well now. Come out here on the porch, and you shall have the whole story."

The physician soon after arrived, interrupting the dramatic account which the hero of the hour was giving of his part in the affair. He examined and dressed the wound, pronouncing it not dangerous, though likely to prostrate his patient for some time, the danger of prostration being aggravated by the great loss of blood that had occurred. The bullet had buried itself in the body, but at no great depth, and he fortunately succeeded in extracting it at almost the first effort. This imperative duty having been attended to, and his patient conveyed to the apartment prepared for him, and made as comfortable as possible, he for the first time demanded an explanation of the occurrence.

This was given by Solomon in full detail,

in which he described, with keen self-satisfaction, his suspicions of the party on first seeing them, and the quick retribution that had befallen the fellow whose pistol did the mischief.

"Why, sir, it was getting dark as Satan in the hollow, and I just caught a true glimpse of the fellow by the flash of his own pistol. I had the rifle to my eye at the minute, and I drew a bead on him quick as lightning and let fly. Well, sir, he leaped six feet high and fell stiff as a nail. Before I could get another load in, the other two had grabbed him and were in the woods."

"This affair must be investigated," said the doctor, somewhat pompously. "We cannot permit assassination to stalk forth in the public highways unchecked. Accompany me to the magistrate's office, and we will take counsel with him as to the proper action to be inaugurated."

Bidding their hostess "good-night," the twain departed for the village.

CHAPTER III.

THE PURSUIT.

The news of this occurrence rapidly spread, and Solomon and the doctor had hardly entered Squire Judson's office before a dozen curious souls crowded in behind them, each burning to hear the particulars of the affair, of which a vague, exaggerated rumor had already traversed the village. Solomon repeated his story with full amplification, dwelling particularly on the portions of it in which he had borne a prominent part, and evidently feeling that for once in his life he had been a heroic actor in a tragedy.

The account was received with numerous evidences of interest and surprise in the auditors, showing that such an occurrence was a rare thing in their quiet community.

"Could it have been a simple attempt at highway robbery, or had they some special design in attacking this stranger?" remarked the squire, meditatively.

"It might have been the first, but I judged it to be the last," replied Solomon.

"The fact is, gentlemen," said the doctor, "we cannot possibly reach a solution of this case without more complete acquaintance with the subject than we at present possess. Before forming any theory, it will be necessary first to obtain the statement of the injured person, which will certainly be of advantage to us in seeking correct conclusions."

"True enough, doctor," said Solomon, "and as soon as the poor devil is able to speak we'll pump it out of him. But just now it's not to know their game we want, but to make them our game."

"That's jest the pint," said the constable of the district, who was present, but had taken no previous part in the discussion. "There's been bad work afoot. The hounds are on the back track, and agin we've guessed what they wanted, they'll be vamosed out of reach. Now my idee is to try what shoe-leather and horse-hide 'll do first, and if we can't catch them that way, we'll try other ways after. If you hit one of them so hard they can't go fast. I reckon there's nought to do to-night, but to get a wink of sleep an' be on their track by sunrise. You know their looks, Sol., so s'pose you go along."

"I'm with you."

"And as there may be contusions to dress, perhaps I had better accompany the expedition," said the doctor.

"To-morrow then, at five, sharp," said the constable, pushing his way out.

The assemblage soon after broke up, satisfied that there was nothing further to be learned at present.

At the appointed hour the three persons were on the ground, fully armed and prepared. They proceeded to the scene of the affray, and without difficulty found the track of the retreating party, marked not only by the trampled grass, but by blood stains from their wounded comrade.

"Correct, my boy. You hit him hard," said the constable. "That's been a fine hoss, shot plum through the heart, by jingo! and hit in the leap! There's a dead shot among 'em, sartain. And sure as fodder they've cut down this tree to close the road! These aint none o' your common footpads, but old hands at the trade, and I've a cute idea that I know where to put 'em."

"Then inform us whither your suspicions point."

"No, time'll tell. But I've got my road laid out. Let's fust follow up this track and see what's at the end of it."

The path made by the retreating robbers through the wood, was as plain as a highway to their eyes, blood drops staining the grass at every step. A half mile's walk brought them to a partial clearing, through which ran a small creek, a rude hut standing on its bank. As they approached, the negro occupant was standing on the brink, gazing intently up the stream. He hastily turned on discovering their presence, and came towards them.

"Hey, Sam, what's wrong?" asked Solomon. "You look down-hearted this morning. Have you been robbed or murdered in the night that you're so down in the mouth?"

"Dat's it, Mr. Sol. I heered dem cursing like wild, and was afeered to come out; and now dey've took my boat."

"Aha! and which way did they go?"

"I dun'no."

"Jest you go down stream, Sam," said the constable. "If you find the boat, come arter us as fast as your black heels can travel. They couldn't get up further than the road back of Joe Bradley's, and that's whar we'll go."

The distance they had to walk, following the windings of the creek, was about six miles, and a considerable portion of this rather difficult to traverse. They moreover kept a keen lookout for the boat, so that the journey occupied rather more than two hours. They had nearly reached the ford beyond which it would be impossible for the boat to pass, but no signs of it were visible, and they began to fear that possibly they had taken the wrong direction.

"Well, I'm afeered we're dished," said the constable at length, "and I'd have bet my pile we were on the right track. But they couldn't eat the boat, and we hain't passed it, so it looks as if we'd sent Sam right and gone wrong ourselves. But mebbe they've played some trick to shut our eyes."

"I'm with you on that," said Solomon, who had reached the road. "Here's wagon tracks that have a fresh look, and the dirt is trampled."

"Look along, Sol. See if their steps go down to the water."

"Sure as sin," cried Sol. "Here they are."

The doctor meanwhile was leaning over to pluck a bright crimson blossom that grew in a bunch of alder, overhanging the brink. As he did so his glance rested on the water between the slender stems of the bushes.

"And here is the boat!" he cried suddenly. "It has drifted inward to the bank by the force of an eddy, or has been concealed here so as to deceive us."

"Good!" cried the constable, "we're on the track so far. Now let's reckon on what's next to be did.'

"It is easy to see by the hoof marks which way they have gone," said Solomon, "but there are two questions to be asked. Where did they get their team? and where shall we get a team to follow them up? There is no chance for us afoot."

While debating this question they heard the sound of wheels rapidly approaching, and the next instant a horse and carriage turned a bend in the road and drove furiously up to them. It was driven by the rotund form of the host of the Sorrel Horse.

"Hallo, Joe! Joe Bradly! Pull up, man," cried the officer. "Which way so fast this fine mornin'?"

"After a party of infernal hounds who broke into my stable last night and carried off a horse and team."

"Stealing your horse isn't the worst they've done," said Solomon. "We're after the same party. It looks then as if they've left the wounded man here while they went through Joe's stables."

"It appears so, indeed," said the doctor, "and our best course of operation will be to enter the carriage and pursue them. They have a considerable advantage in time, but it may be possible that with the disadvantage of their burden they may be detained so that we can overtake them."

"We'll try it anyhow, if Joe has no objection."

"Faith, you'll be a heavy weight on my horse if we've far to go," replied Joe. "But he's fresh, that's some comfort, and it'll maybe take us all if we want to capture the hounds. So jump in, we're losing minutes here in talk that we can't spare."

As soon as the party had comfortably stowed themselves in the carriage, Joe laid the lash to his horse and drove onward with his former speed. It was a country road they were on, and the few wagon tracks that ran into it were so little used, that it only needed a glance to show that the fugitives had not left the main track. The road was very rude, little more, in fact, than a trail through the pine woods, and was full of deep ruts, which must have rendered the progress of the fugitives slow if they had any regard for their wounded comrade.

After driving about five miles, the tracks entered a branch road to the left, which ran off to the east.

"I thought so, I'll swear if I didn't," cried the constable. "It's the Budd gang, sure's you live, and making tracks for their headquarters. I'm fearful our game's up, for if they once get in the swamp it's no use."

"And what is the Budd gang?" asked the doctor.

"Well, well, that shows you don't know much about Robeson county anyhow. The Budds are a set of bloody thieves and villains that haunt the swamp that lies off here afore us. There's a desperate crew of them, half white and half nigger, that spend their time robbing and plundering, and they've killed a dozen men at different times."

"And why are they not pursued and captured?"

"Oh, the devil himself couldn't track them through the swamp. They've a dozen holes to hide in, and them as go in after them don't often come out alive. Three or four years ago we made a raid on them and brought them to a fight on the edge of the swamp. Old Allen Budd and his son Bill were killed, but the rest got off, and they've been murdering and plundering ever since. There's eight or ten of the hounds left."

"And is the whole executive power of the district set at bay by desperadoes like these? There are four of us, well armed. Shall we not pursue them into their haunts?"

"I'm with you there for one," said Solomon.

"Faith and you can count me in," said Bradly. "It's not the first time they've been in my stable and I owe them an old grudge."

"About as much use as hunting a butterfly in a pine wood. But here's the swamp just afore us, and by thunder, Joe, that's your team!" cried the officer, pointing to a horse and light carriage that stood in front of a small hut before them. Back of the hut was a turpentine distillery, around which several negroes were engaged. Near by flowed a small creek running eastwardly. The pursuers drew up and leaped to the ground. The innkeeper ran to examine his lost property, while the others proceeded to question the negroes as to how it came into their possession.

The spokesman of their party declared that he had been prospecting in a small thicket below them that morning before daybreak, when he saw a carriage drive up to the water's edge. Two men got out, and lifted out a third, who seemed hurt. They put him in a boat that was hid in the bushes. One of them then led the horse back into the road and gave him a blow that set him flying. He had been stopped by one of the negroes near the hut. They then got into the boat and rowed down towards the swamp.

"Gentlemen, I'm afeard they've slipped us," said the officer. "But I'm for taking a row down the creek after them. Here's a boat will just suit us."

"Don't do't, mars'," cried the negro in terror. "It's de Budds, shure, an' de Lord knows dere a bad set. But you can't cotch dem, an' mebbe dey'll cotch you."

"There's no use talking. We're going after them anyhow."

"Mind you den, dey bite afore dey bark. An' how's we goin' to get our boat agin?"

"We'll bring it back. You take care of the horses till we come."

Entering the boat, they were soon rowing vigorously down the shallow stream. Solomon and the officer using the oars, the other two on the lookout. The banks of the creek rapidly varied in appearance as they proceeded. The character of the vegetation changed, species of trees peculiar to the swamps replacing the pines, and the firm sandy soil varying to a moist, treacherous surface, with here and there close thickets of bushes, while the melancholy cypress, the juniper, and other swamp-loving trees became more and more frequent. The stream grew narrow and tortuous, wandering like a liquid thread through the endless succession of bushes and high grass. There rose here and there islands of higher ground, above the general moist level of the swamp, and these were successively swept by the keen eyes of the lookout. After proceeding in this way about two miles, they reached one of these island masses fringed thickly with bushes, but in whose centre a rude hut was visible. They landed to examine this at a point where a narrow path was broken through the bushes. Solomon was the first to leap on shore, and as he did so the sharp crack of a rifle was heard, and a bullet whistled by his ear far too close for comfort. The same instant they saw two men turn the corner of a clump of bushes ahead and disappear. They ran to this point but no one was visible, the swamp grass being trampled into a path leading to a close thicket at a short distance off.

"Shall we pursue them?" asked the doctor.

"No use, doc; they'd play round us like a fly round an ox," said the officer. "There's not a safe step they don't know, and we'd be mired afore we made a hundred yards."

"Here's the fellow that's got my mark," cried Solomon, who had entered the hut. "They've left the hound behind them."

The wounded robber was extended on a small bed that occupied one side of the hut. He was evidently badly hurt, for his face was lividly white, and he gasped for breath with every respiration.

"See where he is hurt, doctor."

Examination showed that the ball had passed through his lungs, and that there had been great loss of blood, which had enfeebled him almost to the point of death. The wound had been rudely and very unskillfully bandaged. The doctor proceeded to dress it anew, and evidently gave the patient ease by his skillful handling, for he heaved a sigh of relief and opened his eyes.

"Is the fellow going to get up again?" asked Solomon.

"There is not the shadow of a chance. He is a dead man."

A deep groan from the robber followed this blunt announcement.

"It's so, I feel it comin'," he said, feebly. "Sarves me right, I s'pose. I's led a bad life—and 'll have a bad end."

"I can't help pitying the poor fellow," said the good-natured innkeeper. "It's hard to see a man dying this way—though I know it's weak to pity such desperate villains as these."

"His friends seem to have stuck close to him," said Solomon. "It was only our coming that made them leave him."

"Gents, you've been kind to me," said the dying man, in a feeble whisper, "ye'r in danger here, and you'd better git. The whole set 'll be here in ten minutes—and if they catch ye, not a man o' ye 'll git out alive. They're strong enough to eat ye, I tell ye," he continued, his voice rising with his earnestness.

"Well, as we're no good here, and what the fellow says is the plain truth, we'd better take to our boat and make tracks," said the officer.

They leisurely proceeded to seat themselves in the boat—the same two, as before, taking the oars.

"Row, for your lives!" cried Bradly, suddenly. "Here they come! a dozen at the least. Quick, make her spin."

The boat yielded lightly to the quick stroke of the oars, and shot into the stream. A yell from the approaching gang told that they were discovered, and the two oarsmen made the ashen blades quiver in their strong hands, while the boat shot onward like an arrow.

"Stoop! they're going to fire!" cried Bradly.

They all bent low in the boat, and a storm of bullets swept harmlessly over their heads. The next instant the boat swept round a turn in the stream, shutting the robbers from sight.

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

Hearts Mismated.

CHAPTER I.

"Now, Donald, you can't be such a tyrant!"

And Mrs. Forest put her hand upon her husband's arm, and smiled till the bewitching dimples came clustering around her red lips. Such a winsome little fairy! But Mr. Forest turned away rather coldly, and went into the library. He took a huge volume from the shelves, and began searching its pages. A pair of dainty arms were laid over the letters.

"Don't disturb me now, Fanny, I'm busy."

"I shan't give you any peace till you say I may go out with Mrs. Dilloway," said the soft, imperious voice.

Mr. Forest looked up gravely.

"If you go out with Mrs Dilloway, Fanny, it will be in defiance of my express command.

"Command!"

The smooth voice had a hissing scorn in it. Mr. Forest looked at her in astonishment. The *petite* figure was erect and defiant. A red rose burned in either cheek, and passionate, fiery glances shot from the beautiful dark eyes that could be so winningly soft. The lips parted, and the white teeth glistened, as the word was angrily repeated—

"Command!"

The two confronted each other—husband and wife in conflict. Surprise and grief struggled in Donald Forest's face. His voice was broken by emotion.

"It is only six months, Fanny, since you gave yourself to me."

She made an angry gesture.

"Did you think I meant to make myself a slave? I shall go with Mrs Dilloway to-night—I have promised."

He rose, and walked backwards and forwards across the room, growing paler and sterner every moment.

"You must not go, Fanny. I will not let you compromise yourself. If you are so careless of your reputation, it is my duty to guard it all the more carefully. It is mine now, you know, dearer to me than life," and a smile flickered over his face.

The tender words did not move her, the half-offered caress did not touch her heart. She broke into a storm of vituperation, and grew quite white with rage.

Mr. Forest stood in a kind of stupified wonder. This was the fascinating fairy that he had believed almost perfect—this was the dear wife whom he had taken to his bosom only six months ago. And now he would almost as soon have touched a maniac. He sat down again. A slight shudder crept over him; a vague sense of despair beset him; all the future years rose into sight, black, terrible, loveless—all his hopes and dreams rudely changed into dreadful forebodings. He scarcely knew the last words that she said, and sat where she left him a long time, without motion. By-and-by, arousing himself, he found that he was alone. He went to the study table, and sat down in the armchair by it, and began mechanically turning the pages of the law book before him. But Fanny was still near him, her angry words ringing in his ears, her sibilant, spiteful voice, her bold defiance, her scorn and contempt so vividly real.

Was this the life that was before him? Was this all he had to expect? What would it be? Mutual distrust, daily bickering, open hostility, always growing farther away from each other, and at last total alienation—if not worse! His face grew stern at the thought of this.

Donald Forest was very proud. Very shy, too. He had been called at college not practical, perhaps seeing people through a rose-colored atmosphere, but the truest, most honorable soul that lived. And so he had gone through the professional *curriculum*, and began at once to test his strength among his piers. And now he saw something of society. Hitherto, his own diffidence had kept him in the background. But now he must come forward—he was drawn out without his own volition. What was one to expect of the dreamy, reserved student, the recluse, the poet? That he would fall in love with and marry the first lovely girl that crossed the horizon. His friends foresaw the catastrophe from the first. How was he to understand Fanny Morris—he, who knew no more of women than the man in the moon, whose opportunities for the enjoyment of womanly society may be supposed rather limited!

Honest, noble, true, chivalric himself, he was sure to think the best possible of them. Of course he had his ideal wife—a creature more like an angel than human—a delicate, ethereal, Undine-like being, with the soul superadded—capable of bestowing grace upon everything she touched, and so unfolding the genius of the future perfect housewife, companion, and mother, developed by the occasions that required them. A certain wilfulness about him, too, which made him impatient of remonstrance, and little likely to heed it. Of what use was it to tell him that Fanny Morris was a vixen—that she was a heartless flirt—an insatiable seeker after admiration? One of his maiden aunts did indeed undertake it, only to be at first laughingly, and afterwards angrily contradicted and repelled.

And so they were married, and went upon a two-months' tour—and coming back, people wondered if Donald Forest had found out what a Tartar he had caught, and searched his face for indications of incipient memory, and pitied him to each other. Had he found her out? Not yet. There had been little petulances that surprised him: little attempts to attract admiration; little acts of selfishness that hurt him. But he made excuses for her, and loved her none the less.

But the storm had burst at last. His refusal to approve her intimacy with Mrs. Dilloway had been the Ithuriel touch that awakened all the worse passions of her nature.

And now he sat, quite at a loss to know what to do, yearning tenderly towards her in all his anger, and shrinking with inexpressible dread from another scene like that just past. And while he sat in the library, the bell rang softly. He heard Fanny run down stairs, there was a mingling of voices in the entry, and then Mrs. Dilloway—he knew it was she—followed Fanny up-stairs. The beautiful boudoir struck the lady with surprise. The rose-colored drapery, the vivid, yet softly-toned carpet, the *bijouterie*, the hundred little elegancies that become a lady's room, were all in perfect taste.

"How exquisite!" exclaimed Mrs. Dilloway. "Did your husband do this?"

"I believe so—yes—but I am so angry at him, Mrs. Dilloway."

"Been asserting his rights, has he? These men are so tyrannical. What has he been doing?" and the lady looked at Fanny.

Her color deepened. She had forgotten how awkward it would be to tell Mrs. Dilloway that she herself had been the occasion of the disagreement. But the lady's fine penetration was not at fault. Perhaps some other experience stood her in good stead. She threw off her rich sables, and let the folds of her velvet cloak fall back a little. Then she said, innocently—

"I hope I am not disagreeable to Mr. Forest. Do you know he was quite rude to me the other day?"

And searching Fanny's face with her keen eyes, she knew that her arrow had gone home.

"Why, yes, to tell the truth, you were the cause of it all. I don't care, though—he knows by this time that I am not going to be tyrannized over," and Fanny's eyes flashed again angrily.

The house door opened, and some one went out. Both looked from the window, and saw Mr. Forest cross the street, and presently disappear around the corner. Something in his air, noble and manly, though dejected now, touched Mrs. Dilloway's heart. She looked from him to the shallow, beautiful woman opposite.

"Frivolous, artful, and a shrew. Only twenty-four and bound to her for life—what a pity!" she thought.

The beautiful face was still cloudy in remembrance of fancied wrongs.

"Tell me all about it, my dear," said Mrs. Dilloway.

Fanny told her.

"And he said you were a tawdry actress," she concluded.

A smile, scarcely bitter, passed over Mrs. Dilloway's face. Perhaps this was not new.

"And disreputable, perhaps?"

Fanny was silent—looking indifferent.

"Did he say that?" repeated Mrs. Dilloway, just a shade of eagerness in her manner.

"I don't know—I believe not. Oh, I remember. He said he knew nothing against you, personally, but your profession and associations were discreditable. But then that amounts to the same thing."

"Yes, it amounts to the same thing, *ma chère*," said Mrs. Dilloway, coldly, adding, under her breath, "to you as well as me."

"Because," broke in Fanny, "how can I go to rehearsals—how can I do anything without you?"

"He will never consent to your appearing on the stage," said Mrs. Dilloway, quietly.

Fanny started up.

"I suppose not—but I shall for all that. You know I have given my word to Mr. Strathsea."

It was evident her love for her husband was quite dead, if, indeed, she had ever known any sentiment worthy of that name. Was it worth while to save her? queried Mrs. Dilloway. Why not let her go on to her legitimate end? There were enough women under masks now. The world might as well know her for what she was. You see Mrs. Dilloway had a poor opinion of *soi-disant* respectable society.

"And Mr. Strathsea will be quite angry if I fail him," continued Fanny.

Mrs. Dilloway laughed lightly.

"Quite."

"He said he should depend upon me for the part of *Victoire* in 'The Two Brides.'"

Mrs. Dilloway drew her elegant wrappings around her, stroked her muff with her gloved hand, and smiled, as if to herself.

"So you think, dear, you will not give me up for your husband—me and Mr. Strathsea?" she said, softly.

"No, I told him so!"

The look in Fanny's face meant determination.

"Then I'll tell Mr. Strathsea that you won't fail to come to rehearsal this afternoon. And now *au revoir*, my dear. That color of yours is very becoming."

"Remember that my incognito is to be strictly kept," called Fanny from the steps.

"I will remember."

"A tawdry actress," thought Mrs. Dilloway, as she walked down the street. "But not disreputable," and a smile, real, sweet, and womanly, hovered about her lips.

A good many persons looked at her as she passed, and wondered who she might be. When she appeared upon the boards that night, astonishing, thrilling, moving them to lofty scorn, touching them to tender pity, some haunting remembrance of the queenly face lingered in their minds, yet too vague and uncertain to be traced to its association. She walked more leisurely as she came into the street where the shops were, stopping to look in at the windows, that sweet smile still lingering about her lips. The windows were full of toys, all sorts of indescribable knick-knacks, beautiful and grotesque. It was the day before Christmas. Mrs. Dilloway looked a few minutes, her face every instant growing softer and kinder. She went in presently, drew out her well-filled purse, lingered lovingly over her purchases.

"Where shall I send the things, madam?" said the shopman.

"I will take them myself," said Mrs. Dilloway.

The young man looked surprised. But this was Christmas-Eve, and even fine ladies might carry packages to-day. And so Mrs. Dilloway went away with both hands, and her muff, and pocket full. But now she turned into the busiest street, threaded its crowd, and in a few minutes, passing through an alley, went up to a small door that led into the theatre. She went straight to a small private room, where it would appear she was at home. There was a bit of carpet on the floor, once elegant, but long since grown shabby; a velvet sofa, soiled and defaced; a rocking-chair or two, and a large, handsome mirror completed the appointments of the room. A gentleman was lolling in one of the rocking-chairs; a handsome face, but worn, haggard, and *blasé*. He had been dozing, but he roused himself when Mrs. Dilloway entered.

"What in the world have you got there, Annette?" he asked, as she laid her packages in the corner of the sofa.

She took out a miniature wheelbarrow, and showed it to him.

"Oh, I know! To-morrow is Christmas—you foolish woman, couldn't you find any other way to spend your money?" yet he handled the toy with something of a child's pleasure in his face. "Won't the little rogue dance though?" he said.

Mrs. Dilloway smiled. Her cheeks were flushed, and her eyes dewy.

"You can't think how sweet he grows, Fred. You'll come home with me to-night, and—"

"Did you see the little Forest?" interrupted Mr. Strathsea.

Mrs. Dilloway's face grew pale and still.

"Yes. She is coming to rehearsal."

"She told you so, eh?"

"Yes."

"That's all right, then. I thought—that is—I was afraid she would change her mind—you women are so fickle—aren't you, Annette?" and he looked at her curiously. The indifferent air was all gone from him now. He was alert and eager. "Eh, Annette?" tapping her cheeks.

"Well, you know Mrs. Forest has been married but six months—her husband is good and loves her."

"The more's the pity. One must amuse one's self. You don't think I care for the pretty little vixen?"

She looked at him. Perhaps not—at least, not much. But the spark might kindle to a flame, if fanned by opposition. Let alone it might wear out.

So they fell to talking of other things—of costumes and effects, and was Mrs. Forest likely to succeed, and if she did, wouldn't the public be half wild to penetrate the incognito. An hour went by.

"I'm going home now, Fred," and Mrs. Dilloway went out.

Mr. Strathsea lit a cigar, smoked, and thought, pleasantly, it would seem, from the expression of his face. Mrs. Dilloway traversed a few streets, turned at last into a square, and rang the bell at the door of a very respectable, quiet-looking house.

Presently she heard the patter of little feet in the hall within, as she stood waiting, and still smiling happily. A woman opened the door, and in a moment three little faces were put up for kisses, and three little voices mingled in eager talk. She put off her wrappings, and drew them around her. To-morrow was Christmas, and to-day, at least, they would be happy, and to-night Fred would come home with her. So she sat all the short winter afternoon telling them stories of the dear Christ-child, and singing soft lullabies. Night came down at last, and the little chubby feet grew tired, and the blue eyes began to close wearily. An hour or two more away, and then Mrs. Dilloway crept softly out of the room, put on her cloak, and drew her cloud over her face, said a few words to the servant, and went to the theatre.

* * * * *

How to escape to the rehearsal, and not allow her husband to know it, was the question that puzzled Mrs. Forest. She was determined to brave his anger, if need be, and go in the evening, but she would have preferred not to have another scene that afternoon. Fortune favors the wicked perhaps, as often as she does the good, and just at noon Mrs. Forest received a note from her husband.

"'Not coming home to lunch'—admirable—'shall be there at a late dinner' by that time I shall be gone to the theatre. The most fortunate thing in the world," she said delightedly, and she ran up-stairs, ha-ha-ing merrily.

Her color grew more vivid as she stood before the mirror, brushing out the long silky black hair. Her eyes were glittering bright, and beautiful as diamonds. The soft, rich, crimson cheek, the dimpled curves, the delicately-cut features, pleased her. She had never seen herself more lovely, she knew she should succeed, and her empty, foolish heart fairly longed for the plaudits that would follow success.

The early night surprised Mr. Forest at his work. These December afternoons were so short it was impossible to do anything in them. He sat by his desk an hour longer, conning bits of paper, leaning over musty volumes, and making notes. Then he rose, gathered up his papers wearily, locked the desk, turned down the gas. Oh, now for home—now for the wife he had longed for. He grew sad and sober, thinking of Fanny. He would go into a shop and buy her a Christmas present. He would have done it before, only he had been so busy. It should not be his fault if they were not true lovers still, he said to himself, as he put on his overcoat, and went down-stairs. Hurrying along the bright, crowded streets, he came in contact with some one.

"I beg your pardon," was the quick apology.

"Why, is it you, Mr. Forest? I'm so glad," and the lady adjusted her dress, disturbed by the encounter, with a look of relief. "You're surprised to see me out alone, I dare say, but I've been planning a little surprise for my husband and children. To-morrow is Christmas, you know," she continued.

It was the wife of his senior partner, and he had always liked Mrs. Seymour. He turned and walked with her to her own door—it was only a few streets from his own house—and by the time he left her, she had imparted to him some of her own gayety and happiness.

"I won't urge you to stop," she said, laughingly, as he drew the bell. "I daresay Mrs. Forest is waiting impatiently for you."

He looked back at the glowing parlor windows after he had passed on. How happy everybody seemed! And then he tried to be so also, and began to picture Fanny's pleasure at the gift of the elegant set of pearls she had teased him for. He had not felt quite able to afford them—was not now—only he would take unusual pains to gratify her. He could pinch himself a little to make up for it, if it were necessary.

"Is Mrs. Forest in?" he asked of the girl who admitted him.

"No, sir!"

His countenance fell, and the quick-eyed servant saw it.

"She dined early, sir, and went out. A carriage came for her, and she said she shouldn't come home till late."

"Very well. She has gone to some of her friends, I suppose. You can send up dinner if it is ready.

And Mr. Forest walked into the parlor.

Fanny had really defied him—done what she knew would displease him most. He had not seriously thought she would do it. Perhaps, after all, she had gone out to meet some other engagement. She might have left a note for him. He looked about him a moment, and then went up stairs into her boudoir. There everything spoke of her late presence—the little glove on the table, the lace-trimmed handkerchief carelessly thrown down. One of the jewelled pins with which she sometimes fastened her hair was lying on the toilet-table. The faint odor of heliotrope—her favorite fragrance—lingered about the room. But no note, no word of explanation or apology for her husband, was there.

Mr. Forest ate his dinner in silence. Afterwards he occupied himself an hour or two with the business he had then in hand, hoping every moment that Fanny would come.

By-and-by, as his loneliness and anxiety grew intolerable, he bethought himself of going out. But where should he go? Not to any of his own or Fanny's friends. It would be thought singular that he should be abroad, unaccompanied by his wife, on Christmas-eve. Mr. Forest shrank sensitively from provoking comment. Suddenly it occurred to him to go to the theatre. He remembered seeing flaming hand-bills, announcing the *debut* of a new "star"—some new drama, too, he believed. Perhaps he would find that it was fascinating enough to excuse Fanny's infatuation; and then he might meet her.

He found the theatre crowded. There were no spare seats, he was told, so he was fain to go into the gallery. Just as he took his seat the curtain went down, and thunders of applause broke from the audience. The people all around him were wild with excitement. To him in his present state it seemed childish and puerile. He had lately been brought face to face with the realities of life, and its mimicry struck him as a fantastic and absurd conceit. So he waited patiently for the curtain to rise.

Presently a rustle and a stir, then a new round of applause, and Mr. Forest turned to the stage. A magnificent *tableau*, and in its centre the charming actress who had called out all this enthusiasm. She was dressed as a bride fair, olive cheeks, and exquisite arms, shrouded in misty *tulle*.

At the first word she uttered, Donald Forest's face grew painfully intent—stern in its intense interest; and now, as the bride faced the audience, he fixed upon her one eager, terrible look, and then his head fell forward on his hands.

"It is Fanny!" he moaned.

Nobody minded him, so absorbed were they in the play. And now she drew his attention, as well as that of all others, in spite of the undercurrent of dread and pain that ran through his thoughts. His wife—his pure, delicate Fanny—costumed for exhibition, surrounded by people he would not have allowed to approach her, dazzling a thousand strangers by the grace that belonged to him alone.

He ground his teeth in shame and anger, and yet sat fascinated and spellbound. When at last the curtain went down, and the play was ended, he roused himself, as if from a dream, staggered out mechanically, and round to a private entrance to the theatre. He beckoned a cabman to him, secured the cab, and posted himself at the door, to await her coming out.

CHAPTER II.

Within, the green-room was crowded with actors, gathering around and congratulating the young *debutante*. Mr. Strathsea was nearest, and presently they all dropped away, and left him alone with her. Fanny was thinking that an hour of such vivid, intense enjoyment as this was worth whole years of tame, humdrum domestic happiness; and intoxicated by her success, and the praise lavished upon her, and the unnameable fascination of the stage, allured by some indefinable charm in Mr. Strathsea, and wholly thoughtless of the consequences, she let him wrap her cloak around her, listened unblushingly to his poorly disguised tenderness, and did not notice the flaming eyes and color, heightened by wine and excitement. She preceded him down the steps that led to the ante-room.

A hand softly touched his arm, and a pair of eyes that might have belonged to a fallen angel, so full were they of remorseful love and sorrow, looked up into his face.

"Come home with me to-night, Fred! It's Christmas-eve, you know," said Mrs. Dilloway.

His face changed. A gleam of tenderness came into his eyes.

"Come home to the children, Fred," she repeated.

"Mr. Strathsea, how long do you intend to keep me waiting?" called out Fanny's clear, imperious voice from the foot of the stairs.

"Pshaw, Annette," exclaimed Mr. Strathsea. "What do I care for such nonsense?" and he shook her off impatiently, and followed Fanny down stairs.

And now there were more half-whispered words, and Fanny's cheeks flushed, and her eyes sparkled as she listened, but half understanding him; and outside, separated from them by the thickness of a wall, was her husband, pacing up and down the pavement, sternly searching every face that appeared.

Mrs. Dilloway went out by another way, hurried swiftly through the streets, and in a little while let herself in at her own door. She laid off her things in the parlor, and began untying the packages she had brought in under her cloak, large, slow tears falling all the time. Then she went upstairs to the room where the children were sleeping, little Aleck in the crib, and Neddie and Fred in another bed. She bent down and kissed them softly, wiping away her tears every moment, lest they should fall and wake them. She found the chubby crimson and black stockings, and filled them with sweets and toys, picturing to herself their surprise and delight when the treasures should be revealed.

And all the while her tears fell faster, till audible sobs broke out, and then she hastened away from the children, where she could weep unheard. It was so different from what she hoped it would be. Mrs. Dilloway had seen life on its reverse side. She knew how much many of the hollow shams called respectable are worth. She was an actress—was familiar with scenes that must needs have sullied her mental purity, and yet, I think, she was not more untrue to her womanly instincts than those fair-seeming ladies who flaunt their finery before the world, and whose sins are covert and not overt.

A low laugh fell upon Donald Forest's ear, as he paced up and down the street, and keenly searching the persons of the group that came out, he saw a slight woman clinging to the arm of the tall, handsome man whom he knew to be Mr. Strathsea. He walked directly up to them, and laid his hand upon Fanny's shoulder. She started, half shrieked, and Mr. Strathsea turned upon him with an imprecation.

"I will relieve you of the care of my wife, sir," said Mr. Forest, haughtily; and Mr. Strathsea, staring at him insolently, and not giving way, Donald gave him a strong push, and then sent him staggering from the pavement.

Mr. Forest drew Fanny away with him, put her in the cab, and was rapidly driven home. Not a word was spoken on the way. Fanny was trying to weave some flimsy web of excuse, but was at heart very much frightened. He followed her upstairs and watched her in silence while she took off her cloak. She played with her ornaments a moment, and then said, in bravado—

"I don't know why you are looking at me so, Donald. Anybody would think I had done something dreadful."

He sat down.

"Fanny, do you know what you have done?" he demanded, hoarsely.

Fanny was unrepentant, audacious, perverse. There were useless attempts at reasoning on one side, petulant reproaches on the other. At last, Fanny said—

"You don't want me to cultivate my tastes. You want me to be a domestic drudge. That's what you would like. I wish I had married somebody who could appreciate me."

And Donald, greatly incensed, replied, bitterly—

"I wish to heaven you had!"

It is easy to imagine Donald's chagrin and grief. That night his thoughts would not let him sleep. The future stared him in the face. The life he had hoped for was not to be his. It was past mourning for already. His life must be found in his business, his books, in society, in art—in anything but love. He thought himself strong enough to live so: yet when he woke, after a brief sleep, in the gray December dawn, the full consciousness of what he had forever lost pressed heavily upon him. He shrank from the trial, and groaned in bitter misery. And now presently Fanny's *penchant* for the theatre died away, and she contented herself with shining in society. At home there was peace, and a thin crust of politeness which concealed the wretched sham that dwelt in the place of love. The bliss and the illusions of love were quite gone.

And so the winter wore by, and in the summer Fanny went to a watering place, exhibited her wardrobe, and made conquests, while her husband sat at home in the office. Nobody blamed or wondered at her. Why should they indeed? Her life was in no wise different from that of most of her acquaintances. That there were terrible possibilities in it no one stopped to consider. And so at the end of three years, Donald Forest was one day going home, if one may misuse that word so sadly, in the twilight of a winter afternoon.

"How worn Forest looks," said a bachelor friend, in passing. "He looks ten years older than he is."

"Unfortunate domestic relations, I fancy," said the man addressed. "Everybody predicted it when they were married. It has driven him to his profession though—a thing he would never have taken to naturally, for he was rather *dilletante* when he was a young fellow—and he is now the most rapidly rising man in the city."

"Poor comfort is that," said the other.

Poor comfort, indeed! But at home there was one comfort—a rosy little girl, with soft, peachy cheeks, and hair like tangled sunshine. It was touching to see how the thwarted affection of the man's nature clung around the child. All his leisure hours were spent with it. Fanny was content that it should be so. It relieved her of some *surveillance*, and drew Donald's attention away from herself. His always blameless conduct irritated and annoyed her, was a perpetual rebuke to her own frivolity, and a thorn in her conscience. But Donald's love for the child was very convenient this winter; her old favorite, Mr. Strathsea, was in town, and Fanny frequented the theatre constantly. Donald was not particularly put out by it, especially since she had outlived her fancy for the stage.

This bleak evening in March, Donald Forest came home, to find his wife out as usual. Not gone to the theatre, for the season was just ended. He did not ask for her, but he went with his book and newspaper quietly up stairs.

The gas was burning low in Fanny's room, and little Floy was sleeply quietly. Donald bent over her a moment. Such a pretty picture—tiny, closely-closed hands, with pink, miniature nails and dainty finger-tips, the conical little nose, and the bewitching rose-bud of a mouth, the chin like the half of a white cherry, and the drooping eyelids silken fringed. Something rose in his heart to mar the delight with which he looked at her, and he was turning away, with a bitter feeling which he would not name, when he heard the door-bell ring.

"A lady waiting for you, sir," said the maid, in a moment.

"A lady! Professional business, of course."

But Mr. Forest did not enjoy the society of his lady clients as much as Mr. Furnival did, and he went down stairs deliberately enough. As he opened the parlor door, the lady who was standing there came towards him quickly. Her dress was tasteful and elegant; there was grace even in the abrupt tone and impatient manner in which she addressed him.

"Mrs. Dilloway!" he exclaimed, in surprise. He saw at once that she was in trouble. His next words took this for granted. "Can I do anything for you?" he asked.

The flow of words that seemed ready to slip from her lips was stayed.

"Can I be of any service to you," he said, very kindly.

The kindness was natural to the man. It overflowed upon all his subordinates and dependents—upon the dog that slept by the office fire, and the kitten that stole up from the kitchen, and rubbed her sides upon his chair. Mrs. Dilloway's heart ached for him—she forgot herself for a moment.

"It is not so much for myself—more for your sake, that I came here to-night," she said, gently.

Some sickening premonition fell upon him. He sat down, and motioned her to a chair. She did not obey, but stood looking at him, a great pity in her face.

"What is it?" he said, in a moment.

"Do you know where your wife is to-night?" she asked.

"No! Do you?"

She put a folded paper into his hand. His face grew very white, as, taking it to the light, he recognized Fanny's hand. He came back, crushing the paper in his fingers.

"So you came to tell me that my wife has eloped—or is going to do so—with this Mr. Strathsea?"

She shrank away from him, trembling. The stony whiteness in his face appalled her.

"It is the least you can do. Go on. I am waiting to hear. Do you know where they are?"

She recoiled a step.

"I can tell you, but I must be assured of his safety," she said, brokenly.

"You want me to make terms—what is he to you?"

She began to sob.

"He is my husband, although we are known by different names—I love him;"

He looked at her wonderingly.

"You blame me!" she cried. "I don't care for myself, though I've tried to keep them apart—for the sake of my little boys. Oh, Mr. Forest, wasn't it as much her fault?"

He paced the room, remembering the baby up stairs.

"This man is safe from me," he said, gloomily, stopping before her. "Now tell me, so that I may know what to do—if it is worth while to do anything," and his face settled into that stony immobility that had startled her so.

Mrs. Dilloway was very quiet for a moment or two, and then said—

"I have another note here, which explains more. Mrs. Forest was to spend the evening at Mrs. Merchant's; a carriage was to come to take her home, but was to be driven out of town instead. It was to take him up at the top of Regent-street, and they were to drive to——, to take the night express for the north. It isn't too late——"

He interrupted scornfully—

"Oh, no! Not too late to save scandal, and this world's opinion is very precious—dearer than honor or innocence. It isn't too late for that—thank you."

"For your child's sake, Mr. Forest!"

The look of scornful contempt died away; a flash of love and tenderness overswept his face. Mrs. Dilloway went away. For a moment Donald Forest stood still; then his plans all became clear to him. In a moment more he had left the house.

CHAPTER III.

There had been a gay little party at Mrs. Merchant's. Fanny's carriage was announced.

"We would urge you to stay longer, but you don't look quite well to-night. Are you not feverish?" as she touched Fanny's cheek in tying her hood.

"I am perfectly well," said Fanny, her eyes every moment growing brighter, and her cheeks a more vivid crimson. "I would stay longer, my dear, only I'm very anxious to get home to my baby," and a tear fell as she spoke.

Lucy Merchant made a movement to kiss her, but Fanny affected not to see it, and hurried away. One of her admirers attended her, and came back quite piqued by her abrupt dismissal, not at all prepared to acquiesce in Miss Lucy's remark, "that Mrs. Forest had a great deal more heart, after all, than people gave her credit for."

The carriage rattled away, bearing its shrinking, guilty inmate. It seemed a very long time to Fanny before they reached the point where they were to take up Mr. Strathsea, and she was eager for the protection of his presence. All her gayety had been put on for bravado. Like most weak, sinful people, she was a coward at heart, and now as they passed pavements where solitary pedestrians walked alone, she imagined every one to be her husband, and was miserably afraid. At last the carriage stopped, and a man, closely wrapped in a cloak and fur muffler got in.

"Oh, Fred, I'm so glad you are come!" she exclaimed.

Some indistinct words that she did not quite understand followed, for now they were noisily rattling over the road. They came into long streets of dwelling-houses, where all the lights were put out, and the people asleep. It seemed as though they were a great while getting out of the city, and when they turned into a quiet street, where the wheels rolled more easily, Fanny thinking she could make herself heard, said—"Are we not almost there?"

"Yes, Fanny, we are almost there," said her husband.

Oh, the terror that fell upon her at the sound of that voice! She shrieked wildly, and tried to do—she knew not what, for her overstrained nerves gave way all at once, and she sank down in his arms in a dead faint. In another moment the carriage stopped, and Donald carried her into her own home, still white and insensible.

She came to herself after awhile, and as Donald stood by her she dropped her eyes, though he did not speak. But another swoon succeeded, and yet another, and when in the morning she was still too ill to leave her bed, a physician was sent for.

There followed many restless days and nights.

"Nothing but a slow, nervous fever," the doctor said, and every morning she determined to get up and go about as usual; but each day found her too weak.

She had lived so intensely that her small stock of vitality was exhausted. If she recovered, she could never again be what she had been. But she was not to recover. Fanny began to suspect the fact after the little hacking cough set in.

The midsummer heats came on, and she grew all the time weaker. Her friends came in to see her, and could hardly recognize, in this faded, feebly-petulant woman, the dashing belle they had known. It was not one of those sick rooms which seem like a vestibule of heaven, where lifted above the passing pain and sorrow of this life, one foreknows the joys that lie beyond the river. But it was very touching in another way—bitterly sad in its want of an outlooking and waiting for heaven, in the desperate clinging of the poor soul that was passing away to this world and its familiar things.

The minister came, and Fanny tried to follow him in his conversation; but much of it was unintelligible, and all strange and unwelcome to her. How could it be else? She had built her life upon the sands, and now the whelming tide of time was threatening to sweep it away. Tears, and regrets, and agonizing prayers could not all at once lift her to those immortal heights whence she could look down upon the wreck of earthly hopes with serenity. It was inexpressibly sad, and Donald, seeing it all, was overcome with pity, and had no heart to reproach her.

One night in early autumn Donald sat there, in the pretty boudoir that had become Fanny's sick room. He thought her asleep, and was singing a low song to the baby as it lay in his arms.

"Donald," said Fanny, suddenly, "you never bring the baby to me. I suppose you think I'm too wicked to love it or have it near me?"

"I thought she would trouble you. Would you like her now?" said he gently; and he rose, and went to the bed.

She did not answer, but went on in a weak, fretful way—

"It wasn't my fault, any more than it was yours. I never pretended to be anything different from what I was. We made a great mistake when we were married."

He laid little Floy in her crib, and stood quietly by Fanny.

"We made a great mistake, I know. I never blamed you for it, Fanny," he said.

"Yes, yes! I knew it very soon. You did not suit me. I wanted more life and dash. A little recklessness would have suited me better. I couldn't help it that I got tired of you. And yet you've been very good to me. Do you forgive me now, Donald?" and she looked up at him eagerly.

"I forgave you long ago, Fanny. Don't think any more about it now. We have both been very unhappy and very unfortunate. We will pray, both of us, to be pitied and forgiven."

She lay silent a little, and then, fixing her eyes upon him, said, wistfully—

"Lay little Floy here beside me."

He did so. A light came over her face—something of peace and contentment came into it.

"I am glad you forgive me, Donald. Some day you will marry again—don't say hush—I know, I hope you will. You'll be happy too, I daresay. I can imagine the woman who will suit you—gentle and pale and sweet—a soft brightness about her, like the sun shining through summer clouds. She will be all that you fancied I was. And then Floy will have a mother."

Donald dropped upon his knees beside the bed, and shook with convulsive sobs.

"O Fanny, I shall never love any one better than I loved you when we were married," he said.

"I know; but I never could have been what you wanted me to—it wasn't in me. I've been happy, though, in a way; but now my day is past. Don't feel so badly—nobody can help it."

The night wore on, the stars faded, the grayness went out with the dawn, and that feverish, unsatisfactory, lost life went with it. And over the earth came a new day, with its multitude of capacities and hopes, its infinity of possibilities, and its world of compensations.

Ten years are nothing in the retrospect, yet a world of events and emotions may be crowded into them. Strange, sad changes the years work around us—stranger, sadder ones in ourselves. Life grows old, hope grows weary, love dies, misfortune crushes us, or the petty routine of life wears away our energies.

Donald knew that he grew old fast: the peaceful years told upon him as heavily as stormy ones had done. And yet their rest had been sweet. But the monotony had grown irksome, and when Floy was ten years old, he began to take pleasure-trips, travelling in Scotland, lingering long among its lochs and mountains, and at last staying in a lovely valley in Wales, till the glory of the golden summer days had paled into autumn. The valley was walled by mountains—great shaggy peaks, that cut the blue heaven with keen, crystalline points, jagged gray rocks clinging to their flanks, bold, outstretching cliffs, overlooking fathomless depths—glowing and beautiful in the splendor of noon, or weird and dim and ghostly in the twilight.

Wandering about the valley, climbing the heights, allured from point to point by wide views that opened constantly before him, he sat down one day in the heart of the mountains, the great peaks shining white and cold about him, the valley lying green and lovely at his feet. Floy was with him—an impulsive, enthusiastic child, full of wild life and exuberant spirits. Donald sat absorbed in the scene, and Floy, tempted by the blue glimmer of the lovely mountain flowers, strayed away.

A moment, and Donald was startled by a sharp, frightened cry, then a loud shriek—a piteous pleading for help. It was Floy's voice! He sprang up, wild with terror. Before him the cliff sloped away gently for a little distance, then for a hundred feet precipitous and steep, broken by rocks and stunted evergreens, and the *débris* of some avalanche that years before had broken away from that side of the mountain: below this, a base of solid rock that went sheer down a thousand feet to a pool of water that lay black and opaque at the bottom of the ravine.

Donald shuddered. Half way down the steep side of the cliff, holding by the little pine tree that swayed under her hand, above the impassible rocks, below the terrible chasm. He shouted to her to hold fast, and in a moment was in search of a path by which he could reach her. He remembered a way opening from below, and leading along the side of the declivity. He took this way, leaped over huge rocks, pushed through tangled bushes, shouting hopefully to Floy as he went.

But presently his path broke off, cut in twain by a gap that he could not cross. He stopped in an agony of dread, not knowing what to do. And now a voice called out sweet and clear from above, and the child heard it, and looked up cheerfully. A woman, in a gray dress, a round white hat with a long drooping feather, a stout alpenstock in her hand.

Above the din of the cataract, and the hoarse rushing of the mountain brooks, he heard the words—

"Go farther down—you can cross the gap a little way below—and I will try to reach her from above."

Donald obeyed, and struggling along the rough way, under the shadow of huge cliffs that overhung him and made night all around him, he presently heard a joyful cry, and some happy words floated over to him.

"I have her here quite safe."

He made his way back, and found Floy, pale and crying, clinging to the hand of the lady, and covering her face and hair with grateful kisses.

There were no words possible; only Donald said, after a moment—

"You have saved to me all that I valued in the world."

And Alice Dale would not have asked so much even, seeing the swift-coming tears, and the tumult of emotion in the proud, strong face.

They went down the mountain together, and Alice pointed out her home—a quaint, gabled cottage, nestling close at the foot of a kingly mountain, a green slope before it, running down to a singing brook. The autumn brightness was over it now, but Donald remembered the long, dark winter soon to come.

"It must be lonely there," he said.

"No; for the world is always beautiful to me."

Donald Forest looked at her—a lovely, serene face, soft brown eyes, that were smiling now, yet could be sorrowful, bands of fair hair lying smoothly over a forehead as pure as a Madonna's. And looking at her, some words heard long ago came singing down the years—

"A soft brightness in her face, like the sun shining through clouds."

The gray mists of autumn were in the valley, and the winds of autumn sighed through the trees. A light, twinkling like a star, shone from the cottage, and two happy lovers were walking up the turfy slope that stretched before the door. The pilfering wind stole some tender words as it passed.

"My life has had its dark days, Alice—sometimes it has been a very weary life; but now, dear love, can you guess what you are to me?—a compensation not hardly won by a lifetime of sorrow."

And Donald lifted the sweet face for a kiss.

Down from the mountain rushed the wild, cold wind, and before it the flowers died apace. But in two hearts there shone eternal summer. And Donald has now, in his beloved daughter and his new wife, found the jewels that he had always dreamed should brighten the casket of his heart and home.

A STRANGE DREAM

AND ITS CONSEQUENCES.

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST,

BY W. WADE WOODSON.

I am no believer in clairvoyance or spiritualism in any form, and yet in the absence of some mysterious and supernatural agency it is difficult to account for the singular circumstances of which I am about to write. However incredible the story may appear, it is literally true in every particular.

A few years ago, I was pursuing my studies in the city of R——, and then being somewhat enthusiastic in seeking knowledge would frequently read or ponder over my books till a late hour in the night. On a particular day I had been closely confined and hard at work, and though feverish and nervous from long and fatiguing application, was exceedingly loth to lay aside my books, though the warning bell had tolled the midnight hour. In gown and slippers I was sitting before a cheerful fire, vainly striving to fix my wearied mind on the book in my hand. Unconsciously I fell asleep, and a dream of startling, vivid distinctness took possession of my overwrought brain. I was walking leisurely along a quiet street, in a retired portion of the city, when I paused to contemplate a large, antique and gloomy-looking structure which stood at some distance from the street. I noted carefully the peculiar style of the building, its isolated situation and all its surroundings. Suddenly a light flashed from an upper window of the old house, loud and angry voices were borne to my ears on the night air. Then followed in rapid succession the sounds of a fierce and deadly struggle, a pistol shot, a heavy fall, and a long wailing shriek of agony and helpless terror from a woman's lips.

I awoke benumbed with cold, for my fire had gone out, and having warmed myself as well as I could over the decaying embers, retired to bed. It was a long time though before sleep again visited my eyes, such a terible impression was made by my dream. This impression was as vivid the next morning as on the previous night. In vain I essayed to confine my thoughts to the daily routine of study, and giving up the attempt, I took up my hat and set out for a walk in the direction indicated by my dream. I found the house, and at once recognized it as a familiar acquaintance, though positively certain that it was the first time I had ever seen it. I was wonderfully struck by the minute and accurate portraiture of the house and grounds presented to my mind the previous night.

After making inquiries of persons living in the neighborhood, I learned that the house belonged to and was occupied by a French gentleman named Paul Santon. Mr. Santon was supposed to be as rich as a jew, and this supposition arose from the fact, that he was always prepared to pay down the ready cash for the notes and bonds which his poorer neighbors were constantly bringing to him, and which he purchased at an enormous discount. As is usually the case with persons engaged in this kind of business, he was very unpopular, even among those whose necessities made them apply to him for accommodation. He was represented as a stern, money-loving, money-griping usurer, whose mind was engrossed with "cent., per cent." calculations, and whose heart was dead to every genial and kindly emotion. His wife had died soon after their settlement in R——, and his family consisted of an only daughter, and a female relative well stricken in years who acted as housekeeper. Unlike her father, Marie Santon was greatly beloved by the few who knew her. She was said to be a girl of enchanting loveliness, of gentle and winning disposition, whose "little deeds of kindness" among the needy and suffering made much atonement for the harsh usage of her parent.

With this information, I returned to my lodgings, but frequently my thoughts would revert to the lonely house and its occupants. I pictured to myself the hard unfeeling man of dollars and cents, counting with the greed of avarice his earnings and profits, wrung from the necessities of the poor. Then with a feeling of tender sympathy, I thought of the lovely maiden, shut out from companionship with the young and gay, yet seizing every opportunity to minister to the distressed.

With such thoughts as these, "I laid me down to sleep," and soon my mind was again wandering in the mystic realms of dreamland. Strange to say, the same sights, scenes and sounds of which I had dreamed the preceding night, were again before me in all their terrible distinctness. I awoke to a full conviction that some terrible calamity was about to befall Mr. Santon and his family, and resolved to lose no time in warning him of the danger I apprehended. I had felt an inclination to do this the day before, but feared lest I should be laughed at, or even suspected of harboring some similar design myself. But the repitition of my dream determined me to acquaint Mr. Santon with the grounds upon which my apprehensions were based, and then leave him to act as his judgment should dictate. Soon after breakfast I set out on this errand, and calmly reviewing the matter as I went along, felt strongly tempted to retrace my steps, as I reflected, how "like the baseless fabric of a vision," the whole affair would sound in the ears of a practical man of business like Paul Santon. I gained courage, however, to proceed, and my suspicions were strongly confirmed as I approached the house, by observing three men of rough and villainous appearance, who seemed to be closely scrutinizing the house, and though their conversation was carried on in an undertone, their gestures and meaning glances satisfied me that they were plotting a burglary, if not murder. Somehow, too, I felt persuaded that the attempt would be made during the coming night, and to delay the warning, would, I thought, make me an accessory to the deed of violence.

I advanced to the door, and having rung the bell was conducted by the servant who answered the call to a room on the first floor, and informed that Mr. Santon would see me in a few moments. The room was furnished plainly, and was evidently the office in which the proprietor transacted his business. Mr. Santon soon made his appearance, and doubtless expecting that I had called to solicit some *accommodation*, seated himself at his desk and asked what he could do to oblige me.

"Though an entire stranger," I said in a voice not altogether steady, "I called in, sir, to inform you that I have strong reasons for believing that an attack upon your house is meditated by a gang of burglars."

"Ah!" he replied, "an attack upon my house. And pray what reasons have you for supposing such a thing?"

With some show of confusion, it must be confessed, I proceeded to acquaint him with the grounds on which my suspicions were based. He listened very patiently till I had finished the recital, and then with a contemptuous shrug of unbelief fixed his eyes upon me and said, "Young man, are you quite sure you are not dreaming now? or perhaps your morning potations have been over strong."

"So you treat my warning with indifference, and design taking no steps for your own protection," I said; "but let me implore you, for the sake of your family, to procure a guard, for as surely as I now address you, your house will this night be entered by thieves, and robbery, if not murder, be committed."

I told of the suspicious looking ruffians I had seen lurking about the premises, but a smile of incredulity still rested on his hard, stern countenance.

"Your motive, sir," he said, "is doubtless a good one, and the grounds of your apprehension may to yourself seem satisfactory, but pardon me when I say that to me they do not seem sufficient to warrant me in asking for a guard. The means at my command will, I dare say, be amply sufficient to repel your imaginary burglars. You at least have done your duty, for which please accept my thanks, unless" he added, "you will accept a more substantial guerdon."

"Think not for a moment," I replied, "that any hope of reward prompted me to give you the warning I have, and I can only hope that the danger exists but in my imagination."

I left the house by no means satisfied with the result of my visit, and as the day wore on, felt more than ever convinced that the attack would be made that night. The isolated situation of the house, the moonless night, rendered darker by the clouds that had gathered thickly over the whole heavens, all seemed to favor the desperate attempt. In my restless anxiety I resolved to make another attempt to rescue the family from their danger. With this purpose in view, I repaired to the police head-quarters and asked to see the chief. I was shown into his office, and briefly explained the occasion of my visit.

His questions and insinuendoes left me no room to doubt but that he regarded me as an accomplice of the thieves. He believed that I intended to put the police on a false scent, while some villainy would be perpetrated in another quarter. Being satisfied, however, in a short time of my position and character, he took a more charitable view of my interference and said, "My young friend, this is certainly a very remarkable appeal for assistance. The night is a stormy and disagreeable one, and I do not like to order out a large force on no better authority than a dream. You can, however, state the case to them, and if any choose to volunteer their services they shall have permission to accompany you."

After explaining the matter fully to the force at headquarters, an officer and four men offered to follow me.

Fully armed, we set off for the residence of Mr. Santon—and on arriving there, took shelter in an out-house to protect ourselves from the rain that was pouring down in torrents. The cold, too, was intense, for the wind whistled fiercely through the cracks and crevices of the rickety old house in which we had taken refuge. The moments seemed long as we sat and shivered in the pitchy darkness. No sound reached our ears save the rushing and howling of the blast, and the men began to grow impatient, and cursed their folly in turning out on such a tempestuous night, and on what they now termed a wild goose chase. They even spoke of leaving; and I, also, began to waver—when voices of persons in the house became audible. A light, too, was seen to glimmer through a half-closed window shutter, and we became satisfied that the burglars had made an entrance, though the noise made in doing so had been unheard by us, owing to the violence of the storm.

We proceeded hurriedly to the front door, which we found open. The sounds of a desperate struggle up-stairs reached us, and before we could gain the upper floor the report of a pistol was heard, a fall of some heavy body, and a succession of piercing shrieks. With our weapons ready for instant use, we dashed into the room from which the sounds proceeded. The body of Paul Santon lay weltering in blood upon the floor—at some little distance, lay the body of a young girl, still and rigid, with a face as white as the sleeping-gown she wore; whilst the old housekeeper sat upon a chair, rocking and moaning in piteous terror. Three ruffians, on their knees before a large safe, sprang to their feet as we rushed into the room, and attempted to escape but after a desperate resistance, were overpowered and ironed.

As soon as the prisoners were secured, we turned our attention to the prostrate bodies on the floor. A bullet had entered the breast of Mr. Santon, and passing through the lungs, inflicted a wound which had proved almost instantly mortal. Miss Santon, in the excess of her fright, had fallen into a death-like swoon, from which I began to fear we should never be able to arouse her—I raised her from the floor, and placing her upon a sofa, tried in vain to call the life-blood back to her blanched cheeks. The elder lady being at length restored to some degree of composure, busied herself in applying restoratives to Marie—and we at last had the pleasure of witnessing a gradual return of animation. But at frequent intervals a convulsive shudder would pass over her frame, and she would relapse again into a pulseless stupor. One of the police was despatched for a physician; and the remainder of the force conveyed the prisoners to jail.

The physician soon made his appearance, and towards the close of the night succeeded in calming the mental and nervous disorder of his fair patient. He directed that the greatest quiet should be preserved, and in particular any allusion to the dreadful tragedy should be carefully avoided. The mind of the young lady seemed to have been stunned and confused to such an extent that she could not realize the awful truth. For several days she made no allusion to the terrible events of that fatal night—but as her mind began to recover its natural tone, a glimmering remembrance of the bloody scene, and a realization of her own situation began to dawn upon her. She did not break out into violent bursts and paroxysms of grief, but low plaintive moanings would issue from her lips, interrupted at times by the expression—"My poor father; they have murdered my dear father. What shall I do—what shall I do?"

Every feeling of my heart was swallowed up in an intense sympathy for the unhappy girl. Two or three times a day I would call to learn her condition, and as soon as she was in a situation to receive the visits of friends, I would sit with her for hours, and strive by reading, cheerful conversation, and other diversions to shut out from her mind the dark past. Her circle of acquaintance was quite limited, indeed was almost entirely confined to those who had been the objects of her benevolence, and these good creatures now testified the liveliest sympathy for their benefactress. Whilst I fully appreciated the kindness of these good people I felt that Marie needed the companionship of friends in her own station. Without consulting Miss Santon, I therefore took the liberty of writing to my mother, explaining fully the melancholy events which had rendered Marie a nearly friendless orphan, and urging her to come to R—— and bring my sister, a tender and affectionate girl about Marie's age, with her. They came post haste on the receipt of my letter, and we determined if possible to induce Marie to accompany them home, to remain till her health and spirits were fully restored. After several visits the invitation was extended, and the young girl appreciating the genuine kindness that prompted it, accepted with tears of gratitude. I escorted them to the train, and when they were gone, and I had returned sorrowfully to my lonely room, there was an aching void in my heart that the world without Marie could not fill. My studies had been neglected since the eventful night of the murder, and now my mind and heart were preoccupied to such an extent that I could not interest myself in them as formerly. I would frequently run up home to look after my lovely *protege*, and after each trip I found my own malady growing more obstinate and incurable. As time wore on, Marie's natural cheerfulness returned, and this united to her gentle and affectionate disposition, her cultivated mind, and extraordinary beauty, made her truly a bewitching creature. I loved her madly, passionately, and yet I felt that it would be rather indelicate to declare my love while she remained my mother's guest.

Mr. Santon's large estate had been placed in the hands of a legal gentleman for settlement, and he in obedience to instructions from the heiress had sold the property, and placed the money in bank subject to her order. She had spent the summer and fall with my mother, and as the winter approached expressed her determination of returning to France. This resolution was earnestly combatted by my mother and sister, who had become deeply attached to their guest, but she resisted all their entreaties to stay, and the day was actually set for her departure. With many misgivings I now determined to try my powers of persuasion. At first she declared that it was her positive intention to leave on the appointed day, but when I had told her how deeply I had learned to love her—how necessary she had become for my happiness—how she would crush out all life from my heart if she persisted in her intention of going away, she graciously relented. Her departure was indefinitely postponed, and when the spring-time came, gentle reader, we freighted a goodly ship with our united destinies. Our journeyings have been through pleasant places, and no storms have disturbed the peaceful ocean of our domestic happiness.

☞ A Chicago suicide loaded a pistol with powder and wad, and filled the chamber with water. He then placed the muzzle in his mouth and fired. The effect was terrible—the whole top of his head being blown off.

☞ In Louisville, recently, a handsome but bashful youth was walking quietly down town, when suddenly a lovely young lady ran up to him, threw her arms around his neck, and kissed him with emphasis. The bashful individual felt an "all over ishness" immediately, and at the same time the blushing lady discovered her mistake, apologized by saying that she thought he was her uncle—and fled like the startled fawn. At last accounts, the bashful youth wishes he could be mistaken for an uncle again.

☞ Placarded in the post-office of a Vermont village is the following notice:—

"My wife, Mary Miller, having deceived me in regard to her age before marriage, claiming to be 26 only when she was 32, with teeth badly decayed, while I am not 22 with perfectly sound teeth, therefore I will pay no debts of her contracting.

His
L. H. ✕ Church.
mark.

☞ At church weddings this season, it is the fashion to reserve the entire middle aisle for the invited guests only who come in full dress.

☞ An Illinois mother was so indignant at the low stand her daughter took in the printed graded list of her school, that she knocked the principal down with a curling-iron.

DIED.

HADDEN.—In Perth Amboy, N. J., on Thursday, Dec. 21st, JACOB HADDEN, aged 80 years and 7 months.

Re-animating the Hair.—When the hair ceases to draw from the scalp the natural lubricant which is its sustenance, its vitality is, as it were, suspended, and if not promptly attended to, baldness will be the certain result. The one sure method of avoiding such an unpleasant catastrophe is to use Lyon's Kathairon, which, when well rubbed into the scalp, will speedily re-animate the hair and prevent it from falling out. Besides that, this inimitable resuscitant and strengthener of the Hair nourishes and stimulates its young and tender fibers, removes all obstacles to their growth in the shape of dandruff and dirt, and ultimately produces a new crop of hair, stronger, glossier, and twice as abundant as the old. As a hair dressing it is notably the most agreeable, refreshing and serviceable article ever placed upon a dressing-table.

PROSPECTUS FOR 1872.

THE LADY'S FRIEND.

REDUCTION OF PRICE!

SPLENDID STORIES.

The publishers of The Lady's Friend have concluded to reduce its price to single subscribers from $2.50 to $2—the prices to Clubs (already very low) remaining the same.

They shall continue to obtain for their readers the very best novelettes, stories, poetry, etc., that can be procured, including articles from the gifted pens of Miss Amanda M. Douglas, Miss A. L. Muzzey, Daisy Ventnor, August Bell, Mrs. Margaret Hosmer, A. M. Dana, Madge Carroll, Emma B. Ripley, Nora Perry, M. C. Pyle, Ida Rowland, etc., etc., etc.

The following novelets, with the usual variety of short stories, are announced for 1872:

WITHIN THE MAZE;
OR,
LADY ANDINNIAN'S TRIAL.
By MRS. HENRY WOOD, author of "East Lynne," "Dene Hollow," &c.

UNA AND HER LIONS.
By MISS A. L. MUZZEY, author of "One Woman's Experience," "Jealousy," etc.

QUEEN COQUETTA.
By DAISY VENTNOR, author of "Prince Charming, etc., etc.

ONLY A WISH.
By A. M. DANA, author of "Jarring Chords, etc., etc.

MISSION WORK.
By Mrs. MARGARET HOSMER, author of "A Turn in Fortune's Wheel," etc., etc.

AN EVERY-DAY HEROINE.
By AMANDA M. DOUGLAS, author of "Solid Silver," "A Little Money," etc.

ENGRAVINGS!

The Engravings of The Lady's Friend are of a very superior character. They embrace beautiful pictures of subjects which touch the sentiments and affections, illustrations of our Novelets and Stories, illustrations of the Fashions, (including cuts from which patterns for almost everything can be ordered at a low price,) illustrations of Ladies' Fancy work, etc.

MUSIC.

A piece of the latest and most fashionable Music accompanies every number. The Music is of itself worth the price of the magazine.

The Most Refined, Beautiful, and Interesting of the Magazines!

In short, The Lady's Friend aims to be, and its proprietors think it is, the most refined, Beautiful, and Interesting of the Magazines—*being in Cover, Engravings, and Contents just what a lady's magazine should be.*

TERMS—Always in Advance.

One Copy, - - - - - - $2.00.
1 Copy of the Lady's Friend ($2) and 1 of The Saturday Evening Post ($2.00), for $4.00.

[Our *club* terms are the same as those of that old and popular paper, The Saturday Evening Post—in order that the clubs may be made up of the magazine and paper conjointly when so desired.]

☞ The magazines or papers in a club will be sent to different Post-offices, if desired.

☞ The contents of The Lady's Friend and of The Post will always be entirely different.

☞ Subscribers in British North America must remit *twelve cents extra*, as we have to prepay the U. S. postage.

☞ Remittances should be made, if possible, in Post-office Orders, or in Drafts or Checks, *payable to our order.*

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R. R. R.

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DR. RADWAY'S Perfect Purgative Pills.

Perfectly tasteless, elegantly coated, for the cure of all disorders of the Stomach, Liver, Bowels, Kidneys, Bladder, Nervous Diseases, Headache, Constipation, Costiveness, Indigestion, Dyspepsia, Biliousness, Bilious Fever, Inflammation of the Bowels, Piles, and all derangements, of the Internal Viscera. Warranted to effect a Positive Cure.

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Whitcomb's Asthma Remedy.—"A single bottle gave relief."—J. D. Cushing, *Toledo, Ohio.*

☞ The Chicago Tribune chronicles the Catacaxy difficulties under the heading "The Cat-Fish War."

OUR NEW DEPARTURE!

THE

SATURDAY EVENING POST.

HALF A CENTURY OLD.

ENTIRELY NEUTRAL IN POLITICS

That well-known literary weekly, THE SATURDAY EVENING POST, having just completed its half-a-century of existence, has resolved to celebrate the event by

A NEW DEPARTURE.

The size of THE POST has therefore been enlarged fully ONE-THIRD, (containing 48 long columns,) and it is now both the

Largest and Cheapest of the Family Papers!

It will contain Novelets, Illustrated Stories, Sketches, Poetry, Answers to Correspondents, etc., etc., by the

ABLEST WRITERS

that can be procured—including Mrs. Henry Wood, author of "East Lynne," Mrs. Margaret Hosmer, Amanda M. Douglas, Burr Thornbury, Ella Wheeler, August Bell, Clio Stanley, Captain Carnes, Lillie Devereux Blake, "Zig," Mrs. Fanny R. Feudge, Mrs. M. L. S. Burke, Eben E. Rexford, etc., etc., etc. ☞ It will be entirely NEUTRAL in politics.

NEW NOVELETS CONSTANTLY PUBLISHED.

New Novelets and Stories, long and short, are being continually published. Subscriptions, therefore, can begin at almost any time.

NEWS OF THE WEEK.

As our enlarged paper will afford us the room, we shall devote about a column in every number to a summary of the most important and interesting news of the week.

TERMS—Always in Advance.

One Copy, - - - $2.50.
One Copy of the Saturday Evening Post ($2.50) and One of the Lady's Friend ($2,00), for $4.00.

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Address H. PETERSON & CO.,
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SINGLE COPIES 6 Cents.

☞ Blue satin cravats for gentlemen are now considered the correct thing.

☞ The Menasha Press, a Wisconsin paper, says that recently its editor was astonished at seeing "two young ladies with shot guns on their shoulders and pouches by their side, striding off to the woods on a general hunt."

THE

SATURDAY EVENING POST.

PHILADELPHIA, SATURDAY, JAN. 6, 1872.

A NEW NOVELET.

We commence in the present number a powerfully written novelet, called

THE SWAMP OUTLAWS;

OR,

A SECRET OF TWENTY YEARS.

BY CHARLES MORRIS.

This is a novelet of absorbing interest, and we think will be read with great delight by our readers.

As we expect to have a large demand for the early numbers of the year, we advise those who wish the opening chapters of this story to send in their subscriptions and orders as early as possible.

ANOTHER NOVELET.

About the first of February we also design commencing another novelet, entitled

SEVEN GRAVES;

OR,

THE HEIRS OF DUNLEATH.

BY ESTHER SERLE KENNETH.

This is a picturesque and fascinating story. Our readers will get some idea by these announcements of the rare treat we have prepared for them in the way of choice and captivating fiction. We are determined that during the year we shall enter upon in our next number, as in that now concluded, no paper in the country shall equal us in this line. The reputation of our stories has always been unrivalled, but in the whole long life of THE POST we do not think it has ever presented to its readers each week a more brilliant array of literary novelties than at present.

☞ A sociable amusement among Russian young ladies is the making of papiros (paper cigarettes). This accomplishment is now being assiduously cultivated by the heart-breaking belles of society here, who, by smoking the fragrant papiros, are qualifying themselves to flirt in English with a Russian accent.

A MAN'S COURAGE.

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST.

Thank heaven! *I* know what men are made of! I wouldn't marry one of the timorous creeturs no sooner 'n I'd marry a woolly bear!

Talk about manly courage and bravery, and all that! I never saw a man yet that wasn't afraid of his own shadder in the night-time.

There was Molly Hobbs—the bravest young woman ever I see. She used to keep a gun standing at the head of her bed to scare away the robbers, though she didn't really expect any'd ever come.

But one night their house was broke into, and Molly she woke up and teched John Hobbs on the shoulder, and says:

"You'd better get up, John. There's somebody in the house."

But John he pertended to be asleep until Molly got out herself. He waked up quick enough then because he was afeared of bein' left alone.

"Come," says Molly, "They're down stairs. I'll take the candle and you carry the gun."

And what do you think her John did then? Why put Molly in *front*, so's to light the way, *he* said, so as he could see to fire, and he sneaked down the stairs behind her, ready to drop ef anybody had come in sight.

'Twas only a cat, after all, had jumped into a broken window and made all the noise. But what ef it *had* been a man?

Talk about *men's* courage after that. The only thing that would a' saved Molly was that they both might a' got scared at *each other*, and run separate ways!

There ain't anything they ain't afraid of—from askin' a woman to have 'em, to havin' a woman ask *them*. It's leap-year once more, but goodness knows, the men needn't be afraid of *me!*

I wanted a new milkman to serve me the other day—I thought if I'd change I might get something besides chalk and water for a week or two—and so I walked up to one in the street, a pretty good-lookin' one, and I says, "I thought I'd stop and propose to you—"

"My! ef he didn't shoot off quicker'n a flash. And when he got clear to the corner he turned round and sang out at the top of his voice:

"I know you, you old maid, you! Can't come any of yer tricks around *me*, if 'tis leap-year!"

But that's the way with every mother's son of 'em. They think every woman's ready to make the leap ef she's asked, and they conclude we're ravin' crazy when leap-year comes round.

I *did* think of askin' Brother Grimes to cowhide that milkman when he caught him; but I heard to-day that he and Semanthy Tooter was goin' to be married to-morrow night, so I didn't ask him.

Most likely he'd a' been afraid to touch him anyway! I expect he's a born coward like the rest of 'em, and I wish Semanthy much joy of her bargain. Ef he'd been half a man he wouldn't a' been caught by *her!*

JERUSHA.

RELATING TO ODORS.

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST,

BY ELLA WHEELER.

There are some things I am sick of; and one is reading in every magazine or paper I take up, such sentences as: "The odor of cabbage and onions hung about the house, as about most houses in the country;" or, "The worthy dame was cooking onions for dinner—the staple article of food for country people;" or, "Her breath was perfumed with onions, an article of perfumery much used by rustics;" &c., &c.

I say I am sick of it. I live in the country, when I am at home. But I am not always at home. I have been in several cities, in my life, and I positively assert that I have seen and smelled more onions in one week spent in any of these several cities, than in any month, any *two months*, spent in the country.

Some country people cook onions frequently, and some don't. I know some who do, but more that don't. Some city people do, and some don't, but I know more who do, than who don't. That is their right, and nobody's business; but I do wish literary people who live in the city, would note the *fact*, and not talk so much about the "onion odors of the country."

As I remarked, it is nobody's business, if city people cook onions every day, and *eat them*. But I know what is somebody's business, and everybody's business! and that is, the sticking of onions into half the food that is placed on hotel tables. I have dined at a number of so-called "first-class" hotels, and scarcely ever escaped without being duped into swallowing enough of the odorous vegetable, to perfume my breath for a week. It was disguised in a tempting plate of *pickles* perhaps, or done up in savory dishes of soup, and I would not suspect its presence, until it was *down*. And this is what I say that people have no right to do. I know onions are called an extremely wholesome vegetable—but Adam and Eve lived without them, and their doctor's bills never ran *very* high: and I believe we all could retain our health, without being *forced* to eat onions.

I *like* the taste of onions, raw or cooked, but I have not tasted one for ten years, save when I have been deceived into it by the "confidence game" above mentioned.

"If meat make my brother to offend, I will eat no meat while the world standeth."

And so long as onions render me very offensive to all whom I approach within breathing distance, I will not eat them voluntarily; and if I am forced into it or deceived into it by any designing hotel cook, why then I will vent my wrath through the columns of "THE POST" upon hotel cooks individually and collectively. I think hereafter, before tasting any article of food placed before me upon a hotel table, I shall ask, "Are there onions in it?" And when making selections from a bill of fare, shall say, "Soup with no onions," "Pickles without onions," &c. And if I am even then deceived into swallowing any of the obnoxious vegetable and have to meet one of the aforementioned scribblers, I beg him or her to ascertain where I ate my onions before setting me down as "One of those rustics whose chief article of diet is onions."

FLIRTATIONS.

Many a maiden, laughing away regret, leads her adorer further and further into the domain of love's rapturous kingdom, weaving around him the soft network of enchantment, until, poor fool, he breathes a lotus-laden atmosphere; is deaf to all sounds, save the low, sweet song of the syren, and his very soul drunk with the intoxication of the melody. He dreams the ecstatic dream of reciprocated affection, and wakes to find himself excluded from the kingdom, deserted for a new admirer; the song which so enraptured him sung to another listener, and something gone from his life that, were he to live a thousand years, would never come back to it. Shut out from his earthly paradise, perchance he seeks to hide his bitter disappointment in the excitement of perilous adventure; finally, it may be, having lost faith in woman's truth, changing into that *thing*, a male flirt; whose business in life it is, perhaps without a single written or spoken vow of love, simply by those delicate attentions which cost so little but mean so much, to win the fresh, pure, trusting heart of a girl—to toy with it as with a token—and finally to throw it back upon itself, as something too poor to keep; teaching her, as he has been taught, that "there are other songs without words, besides those of Mendelssohn," and when her every sense is wrapt in the soft music,

"That gentler on the spirit lies,
Than tired eyelids upon tired eyes,"

suddenly stopping the soul satisfying strains, and leaving her to carry about with her a heart that will feel an aching void until the airs of heaven sweep over her weary spirit, and awakening answering chords, make of her everlasting existence a harmony.

Willis sang as follows:

"Give me a sly flirtation,
'Neath the light of a chandelier,
With music to fill up the pauses,
And nobody very near."

And well known it is that the atmosphere of parties, aided by the seductive accompaniments of music, the feverish dance, the brilliant toilette, the generous wines, the sparkling and mingled wit, wisdom, and folly of conversation, and above all, the conspicuous display of beauty in woman and grace in man, quickens into active life this fascinating source of pleasure. Nightly, words which, if honestly spoken to hearts that listened because they loved to hear, would make life sweeter to souls, words and vows of love emptier than air, are listened to with kindling eyes and warm blushes; and low-voiced protestations that seem to bear the very soul of truth, but "false as Cressida," thrill many a manly heart whose awakened love is worse than useless.

GOSSIP FOR LADIES.

THE CITY FASHIONS.

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST.

DEAR POST:—What about "New Year"—it is necessary to say something, isn't it? Now I know as well as anybody that there is no use indulging in vain regrets; that quarreling with old Mother Nature because she made us a little different from something else, is poor business, besides being unkind, inasmuch as she no doubt averaged the thing and gave us all the desirable qualities she could without "robbing" some other one of her numerous family; but somehow just now I do feel a little dissatisfied; I would be happier, I think, if I were of a moralizing turn. It is so fashionable, you know, to say something pathetic and horrible about the year that is gone, and the days that are never to return—the wasted hours, lost opportunities, and the blessings that have been showered in such profusion upon poor erring sinful mortals. But sorry as I am for everything I have missed in the last twelve months—and grateful as I may be for all I have received—I find it impossible to get it down on paper in anything like proper shape. I would be glad to make everybody weep, if they would enjoy it; but not being sentimental, the chances are, after I had exhausted all my eloquence, pathos, etc., it would not be sufficient to start the lachrymose fluid, and that would be worse than nothing.

So you see, if the readers of the Post must cry, why they *must*, but they can't depend upon me for material.

As for seeing anything solemn about the death of the old year, I confess I don't. I should as soon think of shedding tears at the grave of Adam. The only serious thing about it is, that we are reminded that we are a year older than we were a year ago, and that, to widows and spinsters, isn't a pleasant reflection; though if I were a man and a gambler, I would risk considerable that nine out of every ten of them have consulted the mirror and openly declared that they haven't changed a particle—don't look a day older than they did last New Year.

ABOUT CALLS

there is nothing particularly startling to announce. January, a blustering, disobliging old rascal at best, has seen fit for a good many years to come staggering in, attended by slop and snow, sleet and rain, as though his aim and intention was to break up the social custom of receiving one's friends and exchanging the compliments of the season. In this he has in a degree succeeded.

Ladies do not like to open their parlors only to have their beautiful Wiltons and Axminsters

"Trampled and tracked by the thousands of feet,
Till they blend with the horrible filth of the street;"

and it does seem a little inhospitable to stick up a notice on the front stoop, reading: "Only gentlemen in carriages admitted."

Still the fashion, if not so universally observed, has yet plenty of adherents—and many and beautiful are the costumes prepared especially for that day, and many a lovely belle has been notified to leave her luxurious couch at an unearthly season, and dispense with her second nap, as the hairdresser was engaged every hour except from three to four in the morning. They don't like it much, but what can they do. The pretty curls and braids must be arranged to compare with the elegant dress upon which such a world of time and talent and money has been expended. Of course they expect to captivate some appreciative "he," and if their hopes are realized, perhaps it is worth the trouble and expense. And whether they do or not, there is a satisfaction in looking pretty and in being admired, and with some of the costumes seen it would be a plain miss indeed that would not be irresistible. In most cases full dress is insisted upon. (By full dress, I mean as little dress as possible, and everybody else means the same.) White tulle dresses over white silk are the rage at present, for any grand occasion, and many have been made expressly for New Year's. These dresses are adorned with flowers arranged in an informal manner without any apparent design. The very prettiest have the tunic sprinkled all over with rose petals, that look as though scattered there by a shower. Some of them have overdresses of China crepe instead of tulle; those are usually white, though several beauties have expressed a preference for blue and pale rose color. The corsage is always low—very low, and instead of the points of last season are plain round waists, to be worn with elegant sashes. The sleeve is a simple puff or epaulette.

THE COLD WEATHER

of the week has not been conducive to a display of street suits. The fact is that ladies don't like a shivering walk down a fashionable thoroughfare half so well as they like to lounge in the ease and negligence of an old wrapper and slippers, by the side of a well heated register. There is a general impression that ladies are apt to get lonely if caged too long, but such is not the case; for whoever she is, rest assured she has her dear ten thousand lady callers who are sure to drop in and chipper away on unimportant matters in the most delightful manner imaginable. There is nothing they do not think of, and they can't help telling how Mary and Kate were dressed at the last ball, and how young Mr. Somebody was perfectly beside himself with admiration, and had called every day since; and what a dreadful thing it is about Miss Peabody, and who would have thought it?—and how Dr. Bagelowe's wife has got just the cunningest little baby, only it's a boy, and they are *so* disappointed; and Mrs. Barnton has left the church in which she was reared and has gone over to the "Spirits," and such ringing of bells, and breaking of furniture, and upsetting of dinner tables as there is at her house nobody ever saw.

A great deal more interesting than to be hurrying down the promenade, isn't it? To be sure there are beautiful costumes, and when the weather moderates and they come out, I shall take occasion to give a lengthy description; but at present when one is seen, the wearer is in such a hurry and the wind plays such mischief with the bows and flounces and overskirts, that one can't exactly tell what there is of it.

IN HAIR DRESSING,

the "French twist" is ahead. It isn't a very pretty style, as I have remarked before, but it seems to meet with great favor of late, and when we get entirely used to it, no doubt it will look better. It has a sort of a matronly appearance though, and individually I think the loose curls much prettier for young ladies.

The two long braids down the back are no more seen, except on school girls, which is proper, as it was a most unbecoming fashion for those whose years would warrant some other style. OLIVE KING.

Over the Snow.

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST,

BY CLIO STANLEY.

"Don't talk to me about heroes," Ita Vernon said, as she leaned back in the depths of her arm-chair. "I am suspicious of the very word."

"But, Ita, you can't be so beside yourself as to say we have no heroes in these days?"

"No; I suppose they exist like a great many other curious things, but I've never *seen* one. Why don't they make themselves *felt* in the world?"

"They do," Marcia Coan said, gravely. "And Charlie Calhoun is one."

"I was once staying at the same house with a hero whom I had heard praised for all sorts of brave deeds, and one night the kitchen chimney caught fire, and he was dressed and out of the house like an arrow. He never stopped until he was in a safe place."

"Now, Ita," Marcia began, laughing.

"And another time I was staying in the country with a dear, good girl—only she was first cousin to a hero—and one day as we were all standing on the back porch, some man in the road called out that there was a mad dog coming. There was an empty box that had held straw in the corner, and our hero immediately seized it and turned it over his head, mercilessly leaving us to our fate. I shall *never* forget how he looked when we uncovered him, and he rose to his man's estate, six feet, picking the straws from his hair."

"If you had ever seen Charlie Calhoun, you would not compare him to either of *those* men."

"Perhaps not. Seeing is believing, and I will reserve my decision until we meet."

And Ita Vernon pulled her shawl closer about her shoulders, buttoned her ermine tippet, and bidding her friend good-by, ran down the steps, and walked quickly towards her father's house.

Marcia Coan looked after her, and sighed. "If things would only go as we *wish* them to," she whispered to herself. "Charlie *insure* to fall in love with Ita. She is such a brave, noble darling!—such a mite of a darling she is, and yet there is more real common sense in her than in half-a-dozen ordinary women."

And with another sigh Marcia went back into the house, and Ita ran up the steps at home and flew like a bird straight to her mother's presence.

"Mamma, I have a presentiment!" she began with a merry laugh, nestling down at her mother's side.

"But you are always having presentiments, Ita."

"I know it, and they don't usually amount to anything. But this is a different thing. I have dreamed three nights of being buried in the snow, and of being only a pale ghost of myself when you found me."

And Ita Vernon shivered and hid her face against her mother's shoulder.

"You are really trembling, my darling! If your imagination can make you so restless, I will keep you under my wing until the snow is gone."

Leaning down, she kissed the pale cheeks until their roses bloomed again, and finally Ita ran merrily from the room, laughing at her own fears of the moment before.

Charlie Calhoun came the next morning, and before night-fall he had been introduced to Ita, and much to Marcia's delight, had immediately fallen in love with her.

"She is fairest, sweetest, best," he said, coming over to where Marcia sat alone in the twilight. "I have never seen any woman before whom I would care to make my wife."

And as the merry winter days went by, he saw no reason to change his mind.

They were thrown constantly into each other's society, and Ita found at length that no day was perfect when she did not see Marcia's blue-eyed hero.

"But, though I *like* him, Marcia, I see in him nothing of my ideal hero. Ah, dear, it would be worth a long search if I could once find *him!*"

The day was the brightest and coldest of January's thirty-one days of silver and frost.

The ground, roads, fields and gardens were covered with snow, while from the bending boughs of oak and maple hung thousands of glittering spears, their points shining like diamonds in the sun.

They were to have the grandest sleigh-ride of the season that night, and Ita Vernon had promised to ride with Charlie Calhoun in his tiny sleigh, fashioned like a snow-bird, and loaded down with a pile of snowy furs.

It was early when they started, but they had twenty-five miles to go, and it was nine o'clock when they reached the little traveller's inn at the foot of Bald Mountain.

With dance and song the hours glided unheeded by, and it was past one o'clock when they started again for home.

"Look out for Mad Mike and his men," said the host, as he stood in the door to see them off. "They say he is lurking about here, somewhere, and bound to carry off the prettiest girl in Linoton for his wife."

Those last words were echoing in Ita Vernon's ears as they rode away.

"Oh, dear!" she said, trying to laugh, yet full of terror, "I hope that dreadful man won't meet us to-night. I have a perfect dread of him since—"

"Since what, Miss Ita?"

"It may seem like vanity," she said, "but I *believe* I am the one he means to carry away. What a horrible idea!"

"He shall not lay a hand on you to-night, dear Ita! I only wish you would give me the right to watch—"

The last words were still unspoken, when out from the gloom sprang a lithe and active form. One moment he paused and then leaped directly into the sleigh.

"It is Mad Mike!" said Ita, pale as death. And at the instant, Charlie Calhoun had tossed the lines into Ita's lap, saying: "Drive like the wind, darling;" and at the same moment, he had closed with the infuriated man in a close struggle for something dearer than his life.

He could not fling him out, unless he went over with him; he would not do that, and leave Ita alone—to meet perhaps some one of the bold, bad men who acknowledged Mad Mike for a leader.

There was no other thing to do. He exerted all his strength and threw him down, kneeling directly on his broad chest.

That position he kept for three hours, talking gayly to Ita and encouraging her sinking spirits.

Once or twice Ita thought he would have to give up—his voice seemed so weak, and his face in the moonlight looked so deadly pale.

All her woman's tenderness was enlisted for him, and she could not help doing what she had not until that moment meant to do.

She leaned her head down close to the pale face, and whispered softly:

"*I love you, Charlie!*"

Surely there was magic in that little sentence. He straightened himself, and the warm color came back to his cheeks.

"Be brave, darling," he whispered. "I see the lights at Linoton."

Ten minutes more and they drove up to the hotel where half a dozen of his friends were waiting for him.

"McKnight," he called out hastily, "help Miss Vernon out, and then help me to secure my prisoner."

They sprang to his assistance, a dozen of them it seemed in the tumult, and bound the fellow securely.

"But Calhoun, old fellow, what's the matter with your hand?"

He made no answer. Instead, he fainted away. Mad Mike had had his left hand between his teeth half the way home!

It was bitten through, horribly disfigured, but he had kept back any word to show how he was suffering, and all for the sake of the woman he loved.

"And oh, Marcia, to think that I once doubted his being a hero! My brave and loving knight!"

"You are not afraid of *his* leaving you if a mad dog ever comes, dear Ita?"

But Ita burst into tears, which would not be checked until Charlie came in to get the dry bandage on his hand wet again.

Mrs. Calhoun believes in heroes!

But she says there is only one *Charlie* in the wide, wide world! And she has never regretted her ride over the snow!

DRESS UNDER THE REIGN OF EUGENIE.

From a Letter from a Lady Residing in Paris.

Under the reign of Eugenie, who became Empress by the grace of her charms, extravagance was the order of the day. Then dress was almost a question of state. All the courts of Europe attached importance to it, for we invariably try to imitate what offers itself as a model to us; hence we gradually fell into an extravagant parody of what was already an extravagance in itself.

Unfortunately the fatal example of the Empress, followed by her immediate *entourage*, was soon imitated by all classes of society, and to such an extent that nothing less than the dreadful siege of Paris, or some such frightful catastrophe, could have rendered to the respectable feminine part of the community the rank they should never have lost, but which they have so bravely and courageously reconquered. During that fiery trial the women of Paris showed what they really were and are—women of heart and intelligence in the best sense of these words.

And do not suppose that I exaggerate when I say that Eugenie Montijo rendered worship to the art of dress even as to a god. She had caused to be moulded on her person lay-figures, which were afterwards clothed in her presence with all the new toilets that were made for her; and every morning these same lay-figures were clothed, still under the eyes of her majesty, with the dresses to be worn by her in the course of that day. Whole hours were spent in discussions on the suitable alliance of such and such a sash with such and such a dress, or such and such a coiffure with something else.

This is the strict truth, and as a proof of it here is a quotation from an article that appeared during the siege in one of our most esteemed and honorable Parisian journals, quite incapable and above the suspicion of advancing a falsehood:

"A promenade through the apartments of the Tuileries at this present moment can hardly fail to be instructive, and the philosophical observer must profit by the reflections it inspires. Thus, for instance, the apartments of the ex-Empress reveal to its full extent the utter frivolity of the woman to whose keeping at one moment our destinies were on the point of being confided. Above each and every one of her private *salons* are situated the apartments reserved for the toilet. The latter are composed of a suite of rooms *en enfilade*, through which are conducted *by rail* lay-figures dressed in all the articles of clothing to be worn by the sovereign on any particular day or occasion, and, as if to throw a laughing defiance at science and letters, the figure thus bedizened, instead of descending *ad hoc*, into a modest *cabinet de toilette*, comes and spreads out its skirts in the middle of the library, into which it is let down by a trap in the ceiling absolutely as in a pantomime. Rumor had already been busy with these things, but still it is curious to judge from facts of the all-important role the art of dress played in the life of our ex-sovereign. *Ateliers* of millinery and dressmaking were established *en permanence* in the galleries occupied by the lay-figures, where was accumulated all the finery invented by feminine emptiness and vanity, and where Her Majesty passed a great part of her time."

And this was, alas! the principal, and, most certainly, the most remarkable innovation attendant upon the installation of Mdlle de Montijo on the throne of France, to which she was raised thanks to the combined influence of her beauty and human folly!

But it is time to leave the ex-Empress where she is, and where, for my part, I desire, with all my heart, she may long remain, and return to the present time, more sober and sad, it may be, than when she reigned supreme, but wiser and better by far in the opinion of all honest and right-minded men and women.

WINE AND WOMAN.

Whatever views one may hold upon the much-mooted question of drinking wine, we think no lady who conscientiously and thoughtfully considers the matter, would be willing to add the least iota to the too often overwhelming temptations which meet every young man while making his New Year's calls. If courtesy requires the gentleman to drink the glass of wine offered by some lady friend at each house visited, or if he *fancies* courtesy requires this, his calls must be few, or the evening hours will show an unsteady step, a dulled brain, rude conduct, and often helpless intoxication. Even if you believe there is no harm in using wine on ordinary occasions, will not every lady make New Year's Day a special exception? Do not offer to the young man who offers to you the congratulations of the season, that which may bring him to harm and disgrace. Let your hospitality be apparent in other things. Spread as dainty a table as you please; let there be no lack of good things to eat; and a cup of hot coffee or chocolate, offered with graceful attention, will be acceptable to any guest. It is in the power of the ladies of our large cities, by simply refraining to offer the wine-glass to their guests on New Year's, to save from ruin many a young man. The etiquette which demands that any one, for courtesy's sake, should drink one glass after another during the socialities of the first day of the year, should be abandoned by all well-wishers of society.

THE DANCERS.

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST,

BY SARA T. SMITH.

Only a wandering harper,
Out in the summer rain,
Striking beneath my window
The chords of a gladsome strain.
Flinging abroad like jewels
The passionate rythmical beat
Of a waltz that to me is ever
The echo of flying feet.

O visions of days departed!
O memories bitter and blest!
The roses are withered and fallen—
The flying feet are at rest—
Yet the air grows heavy around me
With perfume of gathered flowers,
The glare of the lighted ball-room,
The ring of the midnight hours.

And swift to the swelling music,
The dancers circle by—
The grace of old in each movement,
The light of old in each eye.
The girlish heads of golden,
Of silken black and brown—
The twining arms uplifted,
The glowing cheeks bent down.

On, on, as the music quickens,
Forgetting care and time;
Forgetting death and darkness,
Forgetting woe and crime—
The hearts of youth, love-freighted,
The hopes of youth—joy born—
Float on, in the paling moonlight,
To the glow of the summer morn.

So near! so near I can fancy
The voices heard of yore,
Speaking again beside me,
Calling me o'er and o'er—
Smiling back as they pass me—
—Most quaint of look-ers-on!—
Pausing for jest and laughter
When waltz and galops are done!

The music dies; and the harper
Goes on through the falling rain.
My thoughts come back to the present,
From a past of love and pain.
So long has the pain been ended,
So long has the love been dead,
I can follow by countless pathways
Where the dying feet have led.

In happy homes and loving,
Some follow a busy round,
Taking their "whispered vows" beside
The girlish heads, wife-crowned.
The springing step goes slower
To music doubly sweet—
Keeping time to the coo of baby lips,
The pitter of tiny feet.

Some whirled away unheeded,
One hurried to sin and shame,
And two are lost in the chasm
Which leaves us—only a name!
Sorrow and cares and loving!
Falsehood and trust and pain!
The glow of the morning bringeth
A mantle of clouds and rain!

HER CITY BEAU.

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST,

BY EBEN E. REXFORD.

"You're going down to the ball to-morrow night, of course?"

Sophie Dane leaned over the gate and asked the question of Hetty Stephens, who was at work in the garden weeding out the strawberry bed.

"Yes, I suppose so," answered Hetty. "I don't care much about it, though," she added, telling a most outrageous fib, for if there was anything in the world she loved it was dancing.

"*I* do!" said Sophie, decidedly. "That Maxfield from the city is going to be there, you know. I mean to dance with him."

"No, I didn't know," said Hetty, as she kept on pulling weeds. "Is he handsome?"

"Oh, he's splendid!" said Sophie enthusiastically. "He's got black hair and eyes, and oh! the most charming moustache you ever saw. *I* think he's just a beauty, but Bob says he don't amount to much in his opinion. Men are always jealous of each other, you know. But I really mustn't delay here any longer, or I shan't get my dress done for to-morrow night. I'm going to have the prettiest blue and white muslin you ever saw. But you'll have a chance to admire it at the ball. Good-bye," and Sophie was off.

Notwithstanding she "didn't care much about it," Hetty was ready a long time before John Sherwood came for her. She fidgetted in the sitting-room for an hour in a very becoming dress of white muslin with green ribbons at the waist and shoulders, and white rosebuds in her yellow hair, and wondered a dozen times "why he didn't come."

By-and-by he *did* come: a tall, broad-chested, handsome young fellow, with brown, work-hardened hands, but none the worse because of that.

John was Hetty's lover. She knew it well enough, if he hadn't told her so. Nobody but lovers had such tender ways with them. And Hetty liked John better than anybody else she knew, and was rather proud of the fact that she had the finest and handsomest young man in Dunefield for her beau.

And yet for all that she liked to tease him. I think most young women have a kind of inherent taste for that amusement.

She and John drove off to the ball. The affair was to come off at the principal hotel in the village, and the ball-room was brilliantly lighted as they drove up.

All the young men and women of the village and neighborhood were there; at least, all the young people who frequented such places of amusement, and the scene had a decidedly "gay and festive" look about it as John and Hetty made their appearance.

"I'm so glad you came!" cried Sophie, kissing Hetty with as much fervor as if they hadn't seen each other for a year. "We're going to have just a *splendid* time, I know."

Pretty soon the musicians began tuning up. After which discordant prelude, they began to play, and dancing commenced with the time-honored old "Virginia Reel."

Just as Hetty took her seat, Sophie came up with a gentleman and introduced him to Hetty as Mr. Maxfield.

So this was the young gentleman from the city? Hetty scrutinized him pretty closely, and made up her mind that he wasn't half so smart as her John. To be sure, he looked well enough, but looks didn't amount to much. It was as much his clothes as anything which gave him his fine appearance.

"Do you dance?" asked Hetty, after a little common-place talk had been gone through with.

"A little, but not in the style I see you have here," he answered. "I should like to learn, however. Is it hard?"

"Oh no," answered Hetty. "It's very easy. You can't help getting the figures right, if you pay attention, and have a good partner."

"Then suppose you favor me with this dance," he said. "I thought you the most graceful dancer in the first set, and think you could teach me."

Of course Hetty couldn't have refused after this pretty compliment if she had wanted to, consequently she found herself at the head of the next set, with the "young gentleman from the city" for a partner.

"It's to be the Opera Reel," she explained, in the interval before dancing. "First you go down the outside and back, then down the middle and back; then you swing, and cast off, and right and left, and then you balance with your partner, and—that's all. You'll do well enough if you keep watch, and know when your turn comes."

"Thank you," said Mr. Maxfield, "I'll try and remember."

Dancing commenced. Mr. Maxfield succeeded tolerably well, but got laughed at for

some of his mistakes, however, by some of the young fellows who hadn't much reverence for the "city chap."

Hetty made up her mind that city people weren't much ahead of country people, if Mr. Maxfield was a fair specimen of the former. In fact she thought him rather shallow and superficial, and didn't like him very well.

"I don't admire that young Maxfield particularly," remarked John to her, between the next dances. "Do you?"

"Oh yes, I like him ever so much," answered Hetty, with a great share of earnestness. "He's so different from most young men here, you know—so refined, and genteel, and all that sort of thing."

"I can't see it," answered John, who had taken a violent dislike to Maxfield. "There isn't a young fellow here to-night that doesn't know a good deal more than he does, if he is from the city."

"Present company always accepted, I suppose," laughed Hetty, who liked to provoke John, and pretended to admire Maxfield for that very reason.

John didn't answer. But by-and-by he asked Hetty for a dance.

"I'm engaged to Mr. Maxfield for this one," answered Hetty, demurely. "After that, I might give you one, if you wanted it."

"Oh don't make any difference with your arrangements with Maxfield on my account," said John, stiffly—and forthwith fell to flirting with Lucy Cross.

"What fools folks *can* make of themselves!" said Hetty to herself, as she watched the flirtation, and kept up one of her own with Maxfield, who seemed to be quite an adept at that accomplishment.

I am unable to say whether she made a personal application of this bit of wisdom or not.

Hetty and Mr. Maxfield danced together several times—and she managed to make John think that she was very highly interested and entertained by the city gentleman.

As she and John rode home after the ball, but little was said. He evidently felt that she was to blame—and she was too proud to confess that she was ashamed of her flirtation. Consequently they said good-night very coolly.

After that night Maxfield came to see Hetty often, and Hetty, knowing that John would hear of it, was very polite and affable, and made the young gentleman think she was highly flattered and delighted with his visits.

She went out walking with him, and let him see her home from church, and rode out in his handsome buggy, and had the satisfaction of meeting John once, walking with Lucy Cross: and immediately she discovered that she "*did* dislike that Lucy Cross so!"

And so she and John tried to spite each other, and by so doing spited themselves worst of anybody.

This kind of amusement went on all summer. When John and Hetty met, they were frigidly cool and polite to each other, and entirely devoted to Mr. Maxfield and Miss Cross respectively, while all the time they had a cordial dislike for those individuals.

One night there was a party, and everybody was invited. John and Hetty were there, and Mr. Maxfield and Miss Cross; and Mr. Maxfield brought a young city friend with him, whom he introduced to Hetty as Mr. Jay.

After an hour or two of dancing, the gentlemen strolled out to smoke their cigars.

Hetty was taking a turn in the garden, when she came to a stand-still on hearing her name spoken.

"Yes, rather a pretty girl," said a voice she recognized as Maxfield's. "I've had quite a flirtation with her this summer. She evidently thinks I'm in earnest, and expects me to ask her to be mine, &c.; but I can't see it. I'm sorry for her, of course, for she'll feel bad when she finds out that I have been amusing myself at her expense, but it's so confoundedly dull here that a person's got to do something to keep from stagnating."

Hetty's cheeks burned with indignation.

"The impudent wretch!" she said, with blazing eyes. "To think I cared for *him!* I wouldn't marry him if he was the last man in the world!"

Some one was coming down the path.

Hetty tried to get away, and in making the attempt came spat upon John.

"Ah, it's you, is it?" she said. "What a beautiful night it is."

"Yes," answered John. "I suppose you are enjoying yourself ever so much?"

"No, I don't think I am," answered Hetty, honestly. "I'd much rather stay here and talk than to dance."

"Mr. Maxfield will miss you," said John with a little sarcasm.

"I hope you don't think I care for that puppy!" cried Hetty. "I'm sure you're mistaken, if you do."

"Is that so?" asked John, evidently getting rather interested."

"Of course it is," answered Hetty, with emphasis. "I don't know as I'm under any obligation to like him, because folks said I did."

"Hetty," said John suddenly, "can't you like me well enough to let bygones be bygones?"

"I don't know but I can, if you want me to," said Hetty, dropping her eyes in rosy confusion. Artful Hetty.

"*Of* course I want you too!" said John.

"I wish you could like me well enough to marry me, Hetty."

"I shan't tell you whether I could or not till you ask me to," said Hetty mischievously.

"Could you?" asked John, determined to know how matters stood.

"I could try," answered Hetty.

I am pretty sure John kissed her, but I am not prepared to make such a statement as a fact. I think he ought to have done so, if he didn't.

Just then who should come up the path but Maxfield and his friend.

"Good evening," said Maxfield coolly to John. "I have been looking for you, Miss Stephens."

We have been talking about being married next Christmas," said John, manufacturing an enormous fib expressly for the occasion. "Allow me to invite you in advance, gentlemen, to the wedding."

Maxfield turned all manner of colors, and evidently felt pretty cheap. His friend looked at him with no little amusement in his face.

"Let's go in," said John. "They're tuning up for a waltz. Good evening, gentlemen."

And Hetty went in, and left her city beau to express a not very flattering opinion of "country flirts."

LOVE-MAKING.

Love-making is an uncommon pleasant employment for the winter nights. You may talk of the perils of young men when they come to town; but there is no better safeguard than giving such young fellows the associations of home and sweet woman. Parents make an immense mistake in taking too severely a monetary view of a young fellow's prospects. I never knew a young fellow under ever so dun a cloud, who, with purpose and ability, could not work out his way into the sunlight. Better even the long engagement, or the early marriage, than many other suppositions that might be put.

"For indeed I know
Of no more subtle master under heaven
Than is the maiden passion for a maid,
Not only to keep down the base in man,
But teach high thoughts and amiable words,
And courtliness, and the desire of fame,
And love of truth, and all that makes a man.'

THE GRAVE.

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST,
BY GIPSY WILDE.

Great God! under the coffin lid
Must our faces and forms be hid?
Are none saved from the cursed sin,
That binds our fellows to shovel us in
As human clods down under the ground,
Away from sight, away from sound?
Aye, take thy loved to thy heart to-day,
For to-morrow may speed him away.
Look at the beautiful broad white brow,
Where thy lips press so tenderly now,
Ere many moons the lips of Death
O'er that brow shall trail his breath.
Look thou well on the soft hair strands
So often and gently caressed by thy hands;
In a little while grave-worms will creep
Where the lovely wavelets sleep.
Gaze long and fondly into the eye
Whose lovelight for thee can never die;
A few more days and its glow will be hid
Cold and dark 'neath the coffin lid.
Tenderly, lovingly smooth the face,
Coax the smiles from their hiding place;
For soon the smile and the face will fade
Into the gloom that Death has made.
Tightly press the lips to mine,
That softly whisper, "Thou art mine!"
Ere long they'll cold and silent be,
Crushed by the last agony.
Gently on thy throbbing breast
Let the tired head now rest;
Dark and cold will be his bed,
Strangers o'er the turf will tread.
Closely around the life entwine
That flushes the warm life-blood to thine;
In a little while no pulse will beat
In the bosom 'neath the winding-sheet.
Wildly, sweetly that life to thee take,
Till the quivering depths of the soul awake;
For soon the shroud will fold him round
In his dreamless sleep beneath the mound.
God of Heaven! will *nothing* save
Our loved from a foul and hideous grave?
Sin and suffer, suffer and sin,
Till the whole world is shuffled in!

If the Father would grant us some other way
To reach the light of Eternal Day,
If He would take to His holy place,
Loved and loving in one embrace,
Without this dying, the shroud and the pall,
And paying the price of Eden's fall!

SYLVIA'S WEDDING NIGHT.

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST,

BY MALCOLM ALSTYNE.

CHAPTER I.

"Sylvia, you astonish me."

Sylvia Derwent pursed up her pretty mouth, and looked at her mother.

"What I said is true at anyrate," she uttered. "I'm sure I can't say:

"'I know not which is sweeter, no not I,
O love, if death be sweeter, let me die!'

"I have heard a great deal about the great, the all-absorbing power of love; but I am certain that I, who am engaged, cannot appreciate nor believe in any such things."

Mrs. Derwent looked troubled. She believed in love matches herself. Sylvia had been very quiet and undemonstrative about her engagement, but the mother had always supposed, heretofore, that it was a deep, strong attachment that bound her to her betrothed, Neal Hereford. And now that Sylvia had made the declaration that Neal didn't seem much nearer than many other friends, Mrs. Derwent was much pained, and feared for the happiness of her daughter.

"Sylvia," she said, "you know that I like Neal Hereford; but I must say that unless you feel that he is dearer to you than all the world besides, you peril your happiness in marrying him."

Sylvia bent low over the embroidery that she held in her hand.

"I do not love him in *that* way," she said in a low tone. "But I do like him, and I don't know that I am capable of liking anyone any better. Perhaps my heart is cold."

"You make me tremble, Sylvia, for your future happiness."

"Well, what am I to do?"

Mrs. Derwent grew thoughtful.

"I scarcely know how to answer your question," she said presently. "I can say this much; you ought not to marry Neal unless you love him."

"I suppose not," Sylvia said in a very matter-of-fact way. "But the question is, what is love with me? Neal and I have been engaged for so long, that it seems natural that he should be my husband. I never feel any rebellion against the arrangement. I confess that I have my ideas of love, and that the regard that I have for him does not fill the measure of those ideas."

"Did you never believe that you felt more warmly toward him?"

"Never," Sylvia answered earnestly. "Oh, mother, I have sometimes wished for that passion that all of Tennyson's verse expresses:

"'Sweet is true love though given in vain, in vain,
But sweeter far is death that puts and end to pain.
I know not which is sweeter, no, not I.'"

Mrs. Derwent rose, and took her daughter's hand in hers.

"Sylvia," she said, "I see but one course; that is, for you to break your engagement with Mr. Hereford. I think that your happiness and his demand it. I perceive that you do not love him; it will wreck both your lives for you to wed him, an unloving wife. I say all this in the face of the fact that, of all the young men whom I know, Neal is the one that I myself would prefer for a husband for you. But *my* preference is nothing if *you* do not love him. Do you not think that it is best that the engagement should be broken? There is no doubt but that the step will be a painful one; but better that than that a lifetime of sorrow and repentance should follow."

"I do not know," Sylvia replied; "I have never had any intention of breaking it. In fact, I do not think I shall. I do not want to be accused of fickleness."

"The matter is with you, my dear," Mrs. Derwent said. "I shall not insist either that you fulfill or break your engagement. Consider the affair, however, in a serious light. Remember that the word friends is not the one that is applicable to husband and wife. Your heart must not be cold toward this man whom—"

A ring interrupted Mrs. Derwent. Very shortly a lady was ushered in.

She was an acquaintance, making a call. Her name was Miss Forde. Greetings having been interchanged, she seated herself, and a fashionable conversation ensued.

"We will have a lion in town—fashionably speaking," Miss Forde said, "before long."

"Who?" Mrs. Derwent asked.

"His name is Ralph Pierpoint. He is from Boston, and is very wealthy. He has also travelled a great deal. Perhaps you have heard of him."

"No, we have not," Mrs. Derwent said.

"I have, mother," Sylvia interposed. "The gentleman is quite noted."

"And will no doubt create a sensation in our quiet town," Miss Forde said.

"I dare say," Sylvia continued, "that he has been so petted that his vanity is his greatest part. I do not like vain men, and I think it is probable that I shall not like Mr. Pierpoint."

"Oh, you are very independent, Miss Sylvia," laughed Miss Forde, "of course! But we girls who are not engaged are not so much so, and we are all prepared to like the gentleman; *very well*, if necessary."

Sylvia blushed and laughed. Presently Miss Forde took her leave.

In due time Mr. Pierpoint arrived. Sylvia met him in society. They were introduced. They grew friendly enough as far as fashionable friendship goes.

Sylvia had fully made up her mind to dislike him. *She* would not be like everybody else, and bestow upon him nothing but flattery. So she treated him somewhat coldly; a little more coldly perhaps than she intended. Ralph noticed this—that is that she was not very cordial to him—and rather enjoyed it. It was a change, something that he was not accustomed to, and something out of the perpetual round of flattery, so that it was desirable. To tell the truth Ralph Pierpoint's was rather a fine nature, and the caresses that he had received had not spoiled him. He had experienced enough to turn almost anybody's head, but was still pretty much the same old Ralph, a genial, open-hearted, clever fellow.

One day Sylvia was walking along the street, carrying some sheet music. The day was a somewhat windy one, and presently, in an inadvertent moment, a gust snatched it out of her hand. She started after it, when a gentleman caught it and returned it to her. She looked into his face and beheld Mr. Pierpoint.

"Thank you," she said.

He bowed and murmured that her thanks were not necessary.

When she started on her way, he walked along by her side. Arriving at home, he was about to proceed on his way, when she spoke.

"Will you come in, Mr. Pierpoint?"

He accepted her invitation, and they both entered the house. He passed a very pleasant half hour, and then took his departure.

After that he called quite frequently, and before long he began to discover that there was some peculiar charm in this girl's society for him. He knew that she was engaged; and after awhile, when he would think of that, there would come a strange pain to his heart.

I know that when he became conscious of this he should have discontinued his calls. But, my dear reader, it is very hard for any of us—in fact, impossible—to always do right; and the best of us sometimes make very serious mistakes, so when Sylvia's society became more desirable to Ralph Pierpoint than anybody else's had ever been, and when the fact of her engagement to Neal Hereford cut him to the heart, though he should have stayed away from her, he did not do so.

I do not know whether to blame him very much or not. There is something that will creep into the heart so cautiously, that will quietly entwine itself about the heart so strongly, that it bears upon us with tremendous influence almost before we are aware that anything is going on within the bosom! And when a man awakes to something like the reality, it comes so natural to want to walk yet a little time in the valley among the sweetly blooming flowers, where the birds sing golden melodies, and the air of Paradise exhilarates, while it is so hard to say, "I *will* stop, this is wrong; I will away to the bleak mountain tops of discontent; not even for a little space will I abide; I will depart, for each hour that I remain here makes it so much the harder for me to go." And Sylvia did not carry out her intentions of disliking Ralph Pierpoint.

CHAPTER II.

The man at last made the distinct acknowledgment to himself that he loved the girl. He made it with a great deal of pain. Another loved her; another had the right to love her!

There, in those last few words, was that which brought the pain to him. And he, Ralph Pierpoint, had no right to love her. Ah, cruel thought! O cruel fate! The one woman of all the world for him loved another! And he could not have even the poor pleasure of telling her his love. He had not had what most every other man does have, a chance even.

I shall not attempt to picture to you the despair that fell upon his heart, when the full realization of his love came to him, with the conviction that it was utterly hopeless. This is an experience that I thank heaven does not come to most of us. I can but pity more than blame the man to whom it comes, even though he brings it upon himself. Is it to be wondered at that bitter thoughts came to Ralph Pierpoint? that his heart rebelled? I think not.

But he did not hate Neal Hereford. He told himself the truth when he said, "that if he wasn't very good, he wasn't bad enough for that." If it was wicked to love *her* so must it be. But because another man had forestalled him was no reason why he should lay his unhappiness at that other's door and curse him for it. No; he wasn't that blind nor that sinful.

The time set for Sylvia's wedding began to approach closely. For some reason or other she began to dread it. Her heart grew heavy at thought of it. She sometimes asked herself if it was not best after all to break her engagement. Then her old answer would be returned to that. *She* wasn't a fickle-minded woman; *she* believed in entering into engagements once for all. And though the closer the time of her wedding drew, the sadder grew her soul, still the more difficult did it become to free herself from the bonds that held her.

Dear reader, perhaps you will condemn me, but I must say that I believe the true course for Sylvia was to break her engagement. I know all the argument that can be offered against that course. I am aware that it would be a terrible cut to the man who was jilted. All that can be said can be answered with one principle: The only sure foundation of wedded happiness is the foundation of perfect love. And only sorrow and repentance can come to the wedded pair that have not mutual love.

Perhaps you are saying that I am giving a fine pretext to people for the breaking of their engagements. Humph! Why my unhesitating advice to any person seeking a pretext for the breaking of an engagement is *to break it immediately*. He or she does not love; love seeks no pretexts. He or she has no doubt made a great mistake, or has done a great wrong in entering unheedingly into the engagement, but oh! that all sinks to insignificance by the side of the terrible sin of rushing, with an unloving heart, into a state the whole basis of which should be love.

And I hope that you agree with me as to what was the true course of Sylvia Derwent. And at last Ralph Pierpoint decided that he would go away. What else could he do? Yes, he would go far away to some foreign country, probably, and though he could never forget Sylvia Derwent, time would heal the wound, at least to some extent. At any rate the only course that lay open for him was to go. When he arrived at that decision he decided that the sooner the better.

Of course he must say farewell to Sylvia. Leaving everything else out he felt that he could not go without a last word. How little was that, when he loved her so?

He quietly made his preparations for leaving, and on the evening before the day appointed called on her, telling himself that beyond all doubt it was the last time he should ever behold her.

He found her alone. Conversation went on, but not in a very animated manner, however.

Presently he said;

"I am going to leave to-morrow."

"Are you?" she said, very coldly. "I had not heard of it before."

It wasn't particularly necessary that she should be cold. Ralph Pierpoint loved her, but he had never betrayed any signs of it to her. Why was she cold?

"The determination is sudden," Ralph replied, as quietly as she had spoken coldly.

She did not answer; she did not even express a word of sorrow. "Not even that much," the man thought bitterly.

He looked at her face. It was perfectly calm and inscrutable. Oh he must go; he could not bear to remain in her presence any longer. It was torture to do so.

He rose.

"I must go," he uttered, very calmly. "Good-bye!"

She reached out her hand, and barely touched his.

Oh, to part thus was too much! The man felt a wild tide of emotions swelling up in his bosom. He half turned—he must haste before they can overcome him.

"Farewell!" the girl murmured. She had not said it before.

Ah! that one word! It brought the climax; he turned; he snatched her hands in a fierce grasp; and before she made a motion, cried out words that astonished her:

"Sylvia Derwent, I love you!"

She drew her hands away—but he went on passionately:

"Yes; knowing all that I do, I love you. In spite of hope, realizing that your love can never be mine, I declare this. If it is wicked to say it, it will have to be so—for I cannot help it. Oh, may never such despair as mine, fall upon your head!"

The girl's face dyed red to the very forehead. She sank back into a seat, and letting her head sink into her hands, burst into tears.

Then Ralph Pierpoint forgot all else but that he loved her, and was beside her, and that her tears were flowing. He bent over her with tender caresses. He murmured her name, and his love, with passionate fervor.

Presently she raised her head; she rose to her feet once more; she lifted her hand and pointed away.

"Go, go!" she cried.

Ah! what mad thing had he done. She was the betrothed of another. Yet her tears!

"Oh—go, go!" she repeated.

Something made him feel that she could not be disobeyed. And he went.

But after he was gone, Sylvia Derwent sank into her seat again, and her tears were renewed.

And Ralph Pierpoint found waiting for him at his rooms an invitation; it was to Sylvia Derwent's wedding, three days in the future.

I cannot tell why that should make the man change his resolution; it did at anyrate, and with a face full of determination, he decided that he would wait till after that. Could he endure it? Yes. Ralph Pierpoint would be a man, and not break his heart for love of a woman. Perhaps he thought it would do him good to see the affair; or, it may be, that a wild hope—forgive him—was alive down in his heart.

CHAPTER III.

Sylvia Derwent's wedding night had come. Arrayed in her robe she sat for a space alone.

Ah! why the dread weight on the girl's soul? All things should have seemed joyous to her. Yet here she sat—the time drawing fearfully nearer as each moment sped, and the pain gnawing the more keenly at her heart.

Oh she was continually thinking about the last three days. Her mind was beholding Ralph Pierpoint as he had stood up before her with words of love, and at that thought a shuddering cry trembled on her lips. *Oh, what was she doing?*

In answer to that question, the girl's soul wailed a cry. That cry was:

"Too late, too late, too late!"

It was terrible. Within an hour of wedding one man, and her heart crying out to her that she loved another; yet sternly believing that her fate was fixed. Yes, she had promised one man to be his wife; she had suffered this thing to go on till now; so *it must be. How could she*, at the very altar, as it were, bid the minister cease his solemn words, and tell the world that she had made a great mistake? She told herself that she could not do it. I think that the pains at her heart caused her not to realize some things. She did not see the great wrong that she was doing the man whose wife she would be. No; she saw it as a matter between herself and her heart. If she chose to sacrifice her heart, the wrong would be against herself. No one should ever know of that sacrifice.

There is one thing that I want plainly understood about the girl. What she was going to do was if you please, a terrible sin. But at the hour when she should take the vows of a wife upon her, that sin would end; would be a thing of the past forever. Mind you, it was her solemn resolution that when the words should be said that would make her the wife of Neal Hereford, her love for another should die.

But now, O, the agony as of death was upon her. It grew so great presently that it numbed her heart, till she felt that she would go through it all with only a certain half consciousness of what she was about. She was approaching a condition of hysterical recklessness that took away from her the responsibility for the time. I don't want to excuse anything that she may do on that score, however, for the blame will go back anyway to the resolution that she had made to carry it all out.

* * * * *

Along the hall the bride and her maids were sweeping. On to her doom the girl was going. Calm enough seemingly, yet with her nails clenching into her palm; calm enough, but what a fearful calm it was.

There came a fierce clatter out in the street, and a hoarse cry or two was heard—of alarm, they were. Sylvia and the other girls paused to listen.

Evidently a vehicle was being run away with. They thought they heard a shock, and then there was silence.

Instinctively the girls remained in a listening attitude for a moment or two. Had some one been killed? Could it be any of the invited guests?

The silence continued. They moved on—oh! coming in at the front door without ceremony were three or four men, men roughly dressed.

But they carried a burden—the burden of a human body. A body that seemed to have no life was this. "This young man's horse ran away with his buggy," said one of the men, "and dashing against a lamp post, he was thrown out. We could only bring him in here off the street, for we fear he is dying."

This was said in a half apologetic tone. A moment later the glare of the lamps fell on the man's face. It was Ralph Pierpoint's, ghastly white.

Sylvia Derwent saw it, and in one moment forgot all else but that deathly white face. The man she loved was before her, dead—for aught she knew. O, in that supreme moment love triumphed over all else, and with a wild scream that was heard by all the wedding guests, she rushed to his side crying:

"O, Ralph, my love, my love!"

The astonished men not knowing what else to do, placed Ralph on the floor. The girl sank beside him with that same cry still on her lips.

"O, Ralph, my love, my love!"

They let his head rest on her lap. And the guests rushing out into the hall, heard those words, and saw this girl clad in her bridal robes prostrate by Ralph Pierpoint, and for hours her face no less deathly looking than his.

She did not heed them. She piteously pleaded with Ralph not to die. O if he would only live, she would love him so much. O that he could live, so that he could know how much she loved him.

All this time Ralph had not made a motion. And it seemed that all any one standing there could do, was to gaze upon them.

At last, however, he groaned.

All present saw an instant change in Sylvia Derwent. Her cries ceased; her eyes grew bright with hope; the blood rushed to her face; then she bent her head low over his face; in a moment her lips had met his.

He did not groan again. But presently they all heard him say—

"Sylvia, I love you!"

* * * * *

It was Sylvia's wedding night after all. But Neal Hereford was not the bridegroom. Ralph Pierpoint was instead. He was pretty badly hurt, but still love made him forget his pains. And Sylvia became his bride.

It was some time before he recovered from his injuries; but he recovered entirely, finally. I do not think that he will ever regret that accident; it gave him love and Sylvia.

The accident happened in this way: He had not given up his determination to go away, and intending to depart the morning after the wedding, had gone that afternoon a few miles off to transact some business. Coming back he had lost his way. Then arriving in town at a very late hour, he had concluded to drive directly to the Derwent mansion, and give his horse into the charge of a servant there. The animal become frightened on the street; the rest we know.

I am happy to be able to state that Neal Hereford didn't commit suicide or do anything serious. There! I believe I'll have to take part of that back. He *did* do something serious in about a year after. *He married!* His wife is a very pretty, loveable little woman. They seem to be very happy. Neal Hereford wasn't the man to break his heart about any woman. The fact is, that in spite of all that Sylvia had once said (as you remember), she had very strong capabilities of loving, and the love that she had *never* bestowed upon him, if given to him, would probably have been more than he deserved.

Of course the events of that night must have humiliated him to some extent, but—well—oh—

Au revoir!

Skale the Scout;

OR,

ON THE RED FRONTIERS.

An Indian Story of the Last War with England.

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST,

BY BURR THORNBURY.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

A CONQUERED VILLAIN—BACK TOWARD THE FORT.

"That ar war han'some done!" cried Simon Brace in a tone expressive of the liveliest satisfaction, as with vigorous strokes of the oars he sent the little craft onward with the current.

Liola, who had seemed absorbed in gloomy and despairing reflections, aroused by the movement of Skale, but not comprehending, uttered a slight scream.

"Do not be alarmed," spoke the scout. "We are friends; you shall be saved from the power of that villain."

The suddenness of her transfer from despair to hope almost overcame the poor captive. She looked, bewildered and trembling, at the speaker.

"Do you not recognize my voice?" asked Hiram. "I am in disguise, but you may remember me now." He removed his hat and his muffling neckcloth.

"Is it—can it be—Hiram Skale?" gasped Liola in a tone of the greatest astonishment and incredulity.

"It is. Control yourself, lady; we hope to rescue you."

He looked toward the groaning form in the bottom of the canoe. Carleton appeared to be reviving, and after being disarmed, he was permitted to come back to consciousness. Skale was ready with a pistol to intimidate and silence him should he attempt to cry out for assistance, and Simon urged the canoe down the river. None on shore had witnessed the assault on the officer, for the mist prevented observation. Everything had favored the daring men.

Carleton now rose up in the boat.

"What means this outrage?" he demanded. "Land me immediately, or you shall pay for this with your lives."

"We have the power in our hands, now," said Skale, in deep, threatening tones. "Do you not know me, Alfred Carleton?"

The face of the villain became of an ashen hue.

"Hiram Skale!" he stammered, in terror and amazement.

"Aye; a second time escaped from the death you thought you had prepared for me. I did not die in the forest, as you may have been told. Oh, no, Alfred Carleton; your malice has not proved fatal to me yet. I am spared as I believe to unmask your crimes and baseness.

The craven trembled as he shrunk from the scathing gaze of the avenger. He glanced anxiously toward the shore as if he hoped that aid might reach him; then at the dark water, as if he would rather be there than in the power of Hiram Skale.

"Your friends cannot see you," said the scout, noticing the anxious face of the villain. "But it may be possible for you to give us trouble. You must submit to be bound."

He drew a stout cord from his pocket, and with it secured the wrists of the prisoner.

"It is not a British officer whom I thus degrade," said Skale, contemptuously, "though you wear the uniform of a colonel. Proctor, Elliott, and yourself, would that I could serve you all thus. You are a precious trio! Unworthy of the name of Britons. You, Alfred Carleton, belong not, however, to that nationality, nor to any other. You are an outcast—and," he dropped his voice to a hissing whisper, "*a felon!*"

Carleton glared at the scout with murder in his eye. How gladly, could he have done it, would he have taken the life of his relentless foe.

"What do you intend doing with me?" he inquired, anxiously.

"Hold you firmly, you may be assured; take you to Fort Meigs, and announce your infamy to my countrymen. You deserve only the gallows. What you will receive, I cannot say; but justice will reach you."

Carleton trembled anew, as he asked—

"And this lady—my wife?"

"Your wife!" exclaimed Liola, in a tone of bitterness and indignation. Dare not to call me such; for I declare anew, in the presence of my rescuers, that I am *not* your wife—nor will I ever be. Would I wed a malefactor, a villain, hesitating not to attack a weak, defenceless girl?"

"You *are* my wife!" asserted the villain, with a fierceness that implied that he forgot his danger. "It is your husband whom these scoundrels thus outrage."

"Insult the lady no more," spoke Skale, in a warning tone. "With but little additional provocation, I could plunge you, bound, into this stream; though I would not have your blood upon my hands."

"I wouldn't much mind a-doin' that ar myself," muttered Simon Brace. "He ar a scaly sarpent, and full o' venom to the tongue. And a-claimin' the lady fur his wife, too!"

"Do you think, lady," asked Skale after an interval of silence, during which he appeared to be pondering the question of their future movements, "do you think that you could endure the fatigue of a journey through the wilderness to the fort? It would be unsafe to leave you in this vicinity, I think, though it is not distant from your home."

"Leave me not exposed to this man's villainy, I beg of you," she replied, most earnestly. "He may escape, and would seek me again."

"Aye, that I would," growled the vindictive Carleton.

"Silence, villain!" ordered the scout, sternly.

"I could bear toil and suffering, I am sure," continued Liola, "if I might only reach a permanent refuge at last. My strength is not so little as you may suppose."

"I know your spirit, lady," said Skale, "and it is my opinion, if you think the prospect not too discouraging, that our course should be directly for the fort. The enemy may remain in this region for months, and it would be a very unsafe and unpleasant place of residence."

"I cannot think of returning to my home, then, though I would dearly love to see my kind foster-parents once more. They must think that I am dead. But I have suffered too much to risk a second captivity. Take me with you to the fort."

The scouts, at the mention of the wrong that had been done her, glared fiercely at the bound man. That one who possessed the exterior of manhood could be guilty of such cruelty to a lady, surpassed the comprehension of gallant old Simon Brace, whose principles of border honor included devotion and reverence to woman. Skale had, as we know, a previous knowledge of Carleton, and was not surprised to learn the depth of his wickedness, though the indignation of the scout toward him was none the less.

"If we could only obtain two or three horses we could get through easily enough," said Hiram. "But I suppose there's no use in hoping for them."

"We mought be so lucky after landin'," quoth Simon, "to find a nag or two; but to get 'em under us thar'd have to be some stealin' done, I calkerlate. That I wouldn't like, 'less it war from a red-coat or a red-skin. This colonel har, I s'pose, has a horse in the army; ef we could only lay hands on *that*, we'd give the scoundrel a powerful nice ride, with his legs tied under the critter's belly and his head toward the tail."

Simon chuckled, rather maliciously, as he fancied the colonel in that position.

The boat was all this time being sent with unslackened swiftness down the river, the scouts taking turns at the oars. The fog or mist was now lifting, and a sharp lookout was kept on both banks. It was the intention to land soon, and strike through the forest for the fort.

"If we could only find horses," was the constant thought of Skale. "I'm afraid the young lady can't stand it on foot all the way."

Yet, desirable as the animals were, he hardly had a hope of obtaining them.

He knew that the country around, the scattered settlements of which Frenchtown was the most important—had been pretty thoroughly stripped of useful animals of all kinds, and that in the British army or of some foraging party, horses could alone be obtained. To the former it was of course impossible to go, and the latter, if met or found, might be too numerous or too vigilant to be surprised.

They rowed and drifted on. In a short time the valley of the river became narrower and darker. Long lines of trees hung over the water, and its surface was quite shadowy. The mist also seemed to be closing around again.

"We had better steer in to shore, had we not?" suggested Skale to Simon who held the oars. "There seems to be a sort of bay or cove just ahead. A little stream comes down, likely. Send the boat in, Simon." The canoe shot into the narrow inlet, and none too soon, for just as the shelter of the cove was gained, faint sounds were heard on the water of the main stream.

"Do you think enemies are there?" asked Liola in an anxious whisper.

"It may be," answered Hiram, softly. "It is well to be guarded. We must use every means to secure our safety. Carleton may raise an alarm if he thinks friends are near. I must anticipate that." The concluding words of the scout were addressed more to himself than to the young lady. Without ceremony he proceeded to gag the prisoner to prevent any outcry that might direct a foe toward them.

"There!" he ejaculated with satisfaction. "I thought I would spare him that before, but maybe it would have been safest to silence him thus. He is treacherous and spiteful, and would almost sacrifice himself to bring trouble upon us."

The dip of approaching oars was now plainly heard, and in considerable trepidation the three friends awaited further developments.

Several boats seemed to be abroad upon the water.

"Can they be redskins?" muttered Simon Brace. "It's well we dipped in har ef they be."

Alfred Carleton alive to the possibility of rescue, listened eagerly to the sound of the coming boats. Hiram Skale glanced at him, and divined his thought.

"Make the slightest noise, Alfred Carleton," whispered the scout in warning tones, bending over him, and this blade goes to your heart; beware!"

Well did the villain know that the borderer meant what he said.

Peering with extreme caution through a small opening in the thicket that concealed them, Hiram saw several canoes passing, but in the partial obscurity he could not make out who the occupants were, save that they were not Indians.

"It's well we didn't meet 'em, whoever they are," he remarked, when they had passed. "It's not likely they are friends."

When the suspicious boats were out of hearing, Simon pulled their own canoe, silently and cautiously, further away from the river. In a short time the little creek, for such it proved to be, became so shallow and narrow, that the bushes on either hand met, and they found it impossible to proceed further in that manner.

"We might as well land here as anywhere," said Skale. "It is safer than upon the river. And now for a long tramp—nothing to you and me, Simon, but I fear for the young lady."

His words were spoken aside, but the quick ears of Liola caught them.

"Try me, my good friends," she said. "You may find that my powers of endurance are considerable."

"We will go a short distance inland, lady," returned Hiram, "and then I think I had better look a little for horses. My mind runs on them. If I forget not localities there is a small settlement just above, and animals may be found there. It is doubtful, but worth trying."

"Take no risk for my sake, I implore you," she said in tones of such pleading sweetness that both the brave fellows felt anew that they would be willing to take *every* risk if she could thereby be benefited.

The conveyance of Alfred Carleton to the fort promised considerable trouble, but Skale was determined that the base man should be brought to justice. Securing his hands behind him, and removing the gag from his mouth, with a warning that any outcry would bring him death, the scout ordered the wretch to accompany them. He obeyed without demur, though scowling darkly. How he hated Hiram Skale! How he feared him!

The trying march through the great woods was commenced. Liola supported by the younger scout, was in advance, and Carleton, guarded by the silent Simon, followed.

They soon came to a spot that offered excellent facilities for concealment or defence.

"Remain here," said Skale. "I will turn back for a time. We *must* have horses. You will be careful, Simon, while I am gone."

"And be very careful yourself, I beg of you, since you think it best to go," said Liola

CHAPTER XXIV.

IN A HAY LOFT—A FOREST MEAL.

Leaving his companions in the forest, Hiram Skale passed rapidly to the westward until he struck the trail of the retreating British. Every man had passed, and silence reigned where but lately the woods rang with the shouts of noisy teamsters, the tramp of troops, and the various sounds made by a marching army when concealment is not necessary.

The scout followed the deeply rutted road for some distance, until a small hamlet was approached, that he had noticed when he and Simon were over the route before. It was then deserted, but now, somewhat to his surprise, he saw as he came near that there were signs of human occupation. A dense white smoke curled from one of the humble chimneys, as if a fire had just been kindled.

"What can it mean?" communed the scout. "Surely, no settler would care to make this place his home for a time yet. He would not feel like improving it much, with armies on both sides to burn and destroy. The spot looked as desolate as a graveyard when I was here before; and not a human about. I must look into this, but will have to be careful. Perhaps I can get a peep through the window, without being seen; the trees are thick about."

Saying which, he stole cautiously to the rear of the cabin which appeared to be occupied, keeping himself well covered by the woods which grew, dense and shadowy, close to the dwelling. Reaching a position from which, with little danger of being discovered, he could obtain a partial view of the interior of the lower room, he glanced keenly in. A rude couch was spread on the floor, and on this lay the form of a man.

From the bright uniform he wore, Skale knew that he was an officer of the British army. Over him bent a second individual, apparently ministering to him in some way.

"A sick or wounded officer," thought the scout. "Left behind because it was impossible to convey him further alive. That other man is a nurse or surgeon. Heigh ho! this is fortunate for us; it's more than likely that the horse of the officer, and of the surgeon also, is in yonder stable. I must determine that soon.

Taking another look at the suffering form on the floor, and assuring himself of the truth of his presumption, Skale crept silently from the spot, and, by a roundabout way, gained the rear of the stable as he had that of the cabin. He entered, and to his joy found a noble-looking steed in one of the stalls, and from the bridle, saddle and numerous trappings hanging near, Hiram knew the animal was the property of the disabled officer. The delight of the scout was unbounded.

"There is only this one animal, it appears; but the young lady can ride, and that is sufficient. I will return and inform them of my success. It will delay us somewhat to obtain possession of the horse, but he is well worth waiting for."

Hiram was about to retreat from the place, when the sound of footsteps was heard outside, and a hand was soon at the fastenings of the door. Hardly having time to leave the stable, Skale sprang up into the hay loft, thinking that the intruder wished only to look in at the horse for a moment, or to give him his hay, as it was near noon. This was indeed done, but instead of then leaving the stable, the fellow threw himself upon a bunch of fodder in one corner, as the scout could see by peeping through an aperture at the bottom of the almost empty mow, and appeared to be fixing himself for a nap.

"Hang me for a blunderer!" exclaimed Hiram to himself. "I believe I'm trapped. That fellow is surely going to sleep, and he lies in the way of my getting out. How long am I to be kept here, I wonder? I should have been more careful, though I don't blame myself for entering the stable, for it was necessary to make sure of the presence of the horse. I could not see from the outside without exposing myself to the view of any one who might chance to be at the window of the cabin. I shouldn't have stayed so long, that's all. That animal held my eye, he did. Hang it, I say. What's that fellow below there muttering?"

He listened, for the man seemed to be moodily soliloquizing.

"Up all night," he muttered, "waiting on that sour old surgeon; now I'll have a sleep that's worth taking."

"Humph!" thought Skale, "just as I supposed. The fellow has put himself there for an age of slumber. What shall I do? Simon and the young lady will think I am lost, or a prisoner, as indeed I am. That villain, Carleton, will rejoice at my non-appearance. He won't get away from Simon Brace, though. He'll wear those cords on his wrists a long while first. Hark! how that fellow snores. He must have been kept awake a week to sleep so soundly in the daytime. Perhaps I can pass him without disturbing him. But folks that live in the woods have keen ears, if they do snore loudly. I would rather have no trouble with him just now."

But Hiram began to be very impatient, and withal a little disgusted with the situation. He was about to attempt a noiseless descent from the mow, when the sound of horses' hoofs outside arrested him, and peering through a crevice, he saw in the open space between the stable and the cabin a party of at least a dozen dragoons.

"I'm in for it now," he thought, in considerable alarm. "I hoped the British had all left this vicinity. They have, perhaps, returned to look after the officer. I wonder if they will stable their horses and *climb to this mow for hay*. My position is getting to be rather doubtful."

The sleeping man was aroused by the noise of the troopers' approach, and rising, he went out to meet them. Taking instant advantage of this, the scout slid from the loft, and hastening to the place where he had entered the building, quickly found his way out. Being careful to keep himself well under cover, he made directly for the woods, congratulating himself on his escape.

With all speed he hurried back to his friends, and found them anxious and wondering, because of his protracted absence.

"Did ye go all the way to Detroit, Hiram?" asked Simon Brace satirically. "Or did ye find a colt, and war a waitin' till he growed into a hoss."

"Be easy, Simon," returned his comrade mildly. "I kept you in suspense for a considerable time, I know, but it could not be helped. I hope Miss Liola will pardon me."

"I am more charitable than Simon," she answered, smilingly. "I know there have been good reasons for your delay, and so does he, as you are well aware. Were you at all successful?"

"I was more fortunate than I fully hoped to be. I have found a noble steed for you, Miss Liola, the property of a sick or wounded officer left of necessity behind, as I suppose. The animal is therefore fair spoil, to-night I hope to possess him."

The scout gave a full account of his reconnoissance, mentioning with regret the appearance of the dragoons. But he expressed a hope that they would be gone by evening.

"The officer may be removed, and in that case we will be disappointed; but we will wait and see," he continued.

"And now for our dinner, Simon, how are we to obtain that?"

"Trust a woodsman for that, Hiram," was the reply. "Ye know I never liked the idee o' starvin'. While ye war gone, the young lady and meself went a troutin' in yonder brook, leaving the cunnel—ef sech ez he ever was a reel cunnel—*to keep house*."

Carleton scowled at this grimly facetious allusion to himself, for he had indeed been left for a short time alone, while the old borderer and the lovely young heroine had employed themselves as stated. But he had been secured in such a manner by the ingenious scout that it would have taken hours to extricate himself from the bonds fastened upon him with trapper cunning.

"Behold, Hiram!" cried the young lady, gayly.

Removing a quantity of leaves—dead leaves of last year's growth—that lay near, she exposed to view a number of beautiful and nicely cleaned trout!

"We caught them in our hands—that is, Simon did, and I helped him by looking on," said Liola, with delight. Oh! it was rare sport. I almost forgot that I was not at home with dear Beaurais—my foster-father. We often went to the woods and returned laden as Simon did to-day."

"Will it be safe to kindle a fire?" inquired the elder scout.

"There can be no danger here in the dense woods," answered Hiram. "We are fully a mile from the track of the army, and except the men at the hamlet I mentioned, I do not think it probable that there is a human being near. The presence of the troopers is only accidental."

"We will soon have a feed, then," said Simon.

A fire was quickly kindled—the men taking the precaution to use those kinds of wood which in burning emitted the least smoke.

"And I will be your cook," cried Liola, proceeding at once in the work. "I will render you some service in return for all you have done for me."

With skill and exquisite grace she prepared the simple, but delicious food. Both scouts, and the bitter and chafing Carleton too, watched her admiringly as she moved about, busying herself in watching and turning the roasting trout, that now filled the air with a most appetizing odor.

The repast, simple enough for a hermit, delicious enough for an epicure, was at last ready. Forth from the hot ashes the browned beauties had been drawn, and the maiden served the hungry men, Carleton as abundantly as the others. "Do good to them that persecute you." How literally was this injunction obeyed by Liola De Verne.

"Delicious, Miss Liola!" cried Skale, tasting the food.

"Locust and wild honey I ha' heord o'," said Simon, "and the honey tasted, but it warn't sweeter than these is in thar way."

And by all, even by the ungrateful prisoner, the meal was eaten with gusto. Whoever in later years has partaken of such food, similarly prepared and eaten in the appetite-creating woods, does not need to be told how enjoyable it was.

"We may have to make more than one such meal during our journey to the fort," remarked Hiram. "We have only our pistols, you know, Miss Liola, and game is not always to be reached with them."

We shall do well, I think, if we never fare worse," she replied. "We cannot always, I am afraid, find such a delightful little brook, so shallow that our hands will answer the purpose of hooks."

"The woods are full of them. We shall not starve, whatever else may befall us."

It is not necessary to say that Skale had informed Liola ere this of the escape of her friend, Isabel Westburn, to Fort Meigs. She rejoiced most heartily to learn of this, and looked forward with delight to the occasion when she should again see her strangely-found friend.

"The presence of Alfred Carleton is a terror to me," said the young lady, aside, to the younger scout. "You will be very watchful, will you not, Hiram? He glares at us so wickedly, at times, that I know it is in his heart to murder us."

"Be assured, lady, that we shall be very vigilant. He is a coward, and will do nothing that might result in injury to himself. It might appear to you imprudent for Simon to leave him alone for the brief period he did, but it was really not. Simon, with a stout cord of sufficient length, can bind a man so that it is impossible for him to release himself without hours of labor. I never saw the equal of the old scout in respect to his skill in securing a prisoner. We may have some difficulty in taking this man with us: but he can not be slain in cold blood."

"Oh, no; not that," shuddered Liola.

"Nor can we release him; he would undoubtedly set pursuers upon our track. He must, therefore, accompany us. He is an utter villain, Miss Liola, as you do not need to be informed, and I will, when better opportunity offers, tell you all I know of him."

"You have met him before, then? You implied as much though, I remember, on the river."

"Yes, answered the scout, with a sudden fierceness, "I know him only too well. He is not an Englishman, but a Canadian; that is, by birth. He deserves not the title of citizen nor subject. At another time you shall hear my story. It is growing late now, and my attention must be turned to obtaining the horse. We have made little progress, to-day, but it may be remembered that our enemies are retreating. Whether Carleton is missed in the army, I cannot say; it is not likely that search will be made for him. Make yourself comfortable now, if possible; I must go."

He whispered a few words to Simon, and then set off in the direction he had taken in the morning.

"May he return in safety," prayed Liola silently. "It begins to be irksome, staying here, but I must be patient. The excitement of active escape, will soon, I trust, be felt. I am near my own home, yet feel as if I were a thousand miles away. Dear Beaurais! dear Manette! I am nigh, yet cannot venture to you. Shall I ever see you again? You sorrow for me, I doubt not, as I long for you. How little do you dream of my presence! What have I not endured since I was taken from you! God comfort you, and help me! I am so weak, so lonely, so lost!"

Tears filled the maiden's eyes. A slight movement caused her to look up. She caught the gaze of honest Simon Brace fixed upon her with such pitying, sympathizing earnestness that the soul of the poor girl filled at once with a feeling of comfort. Simon said not a word, but his mute look was eloquent with kindly emotion.

"I have a noble friend in that honest old man," she thought. "Another has just left me. Dear Isabel Westburn awaits me at the fort. Why should I despair?—why sorrow? I am unused to trial, but I will learn to endure. All may be for the best."

With a silent prayer to God, she sank to the ground by the side of the smouldering fire, quieted, strengthened, and more patient. Then, as the night deepened in the lonely woods, the return of Hiram Skale was awaited.

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

☞ In New York, ladies, when on promenade, wear a belt of leather around the waist, to which is fastened a clasp which holds an umbrella of brown, purple, or blue silk on one side, so that a lady may carry an umbrella without being obliged to take her hands out of her muff.

☞ Alexis presented Parepa with a pair of bracelets. He heard her sing in opera at Buffalo.

Our Drama at Hickory Hill.

A HOLIDAY STORY FOR BOYS.

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST,

BY MAURICE F. EGAN.

The Hickory Hill Academy was situated on Hickory Hill. The view from the academy was really fine. It commanded a long stretch of fields and woodland, with here and there a silver thread of water flashing amid verdure.

Doctor Arthur was the principal. He was assisted by Alpheus Himm, B. A., in managing the institution. There were other teachers, but they did not reside at the academy.

Doctor Arthur was a very good man in the main, but, like most of us, he had some faults. His excessive fondness for delving for the roots of dead languages, and his belief in the dogma that boys can be successfully governed only by the exercise of the most inflexible sternness, were his most prominent defects.

The chief characteristic of Alpheus Himm, B. A., was the concentrated dignity of his manners. He was a model of deportment. He stood six feet high in his stockings—not that he ever entered the school-room with those necessary articles in sight—the very idea of such a thing would have thrilled him with horror—I mean merely to intimate that he stood higher in his boots. The appearance of his head and neck reminded one of a large cannon-ball perched on a thin, round post. A new scholar had once sung—

"'Tis strange that legs so very slim
Can upright hold the stately Himm."

The youthful poet received a sound flogging, and he never dared be disrespectful again, although there was some truth in the lines.

The pupils numbered about one hundred, of whom J. Will Hallet was one. We were all boarders, and Doctor Arthur ruled us with a rod of iron. His system of discipline could have scarcely been stricter. A half hour on the playground, or, if it rained, in the study-hall, was all the time allowed each day for recreation. This was not sufficient; we needed more time for "blowing off steam," as we called it. In consideration of this fact, I hope you will not too severely censure our method of enjoying ourselves when the opportunity occurred.

One morning, before the regular business of the day had begun, Bob Boggs bounced into the recitation-room where we of the first class were assembled. He seemed in high glee; "a silent laugh, a loud smile," stretched his mouth almost from ear to ear.

"Good-morning, fellows!" he exclaimed, "I've *splendid* news!"

"Let's hear it, then," was our response, "and hurry up, for Himm's coming across the lawn with awful strides."

"Well," began Bob, drawing the word out as long as possible, for he knew we were burning with impatience, "well, the gardener told me,—but perhaps I'd better not tell you until recess-time"—and he stopped short, looking around with a tantalizing grin; "you don't care much about hearing it—and if you do, patience is a virtue, so I'll give you a chance of becoming virtuous."

"Go on, Bob, and stop your fooling."

"Well, old Brown, the gardener, says that the doctor is going to Milton for two weeks; so Himm and the teachers are going to have a supper at the Hen and Chickens, on Wednesday night, when we're all safe asleep. Ain't it jolly?"

Milton was about eight miles away; the Hen and Chickens was a hotel on the Milton road.

Bob continued—

"This is Saturday. The doctor will start to-day. We'll arrange everything at recreation; and we'll have a stunning time on Wednesday night—lots of fun. Three cheers?"

The cheers, however, were prematurely silenced by Mr. Himm's entrance.

You must excuse Bob's language—for at Hickory Hill, we had to learn so much Greek that we had no time for English.

During the morning Doctor Arthur came in, and after giving us a great deal of good advice, plentifully seasoned with quotations from Cicero and Virgil, he informed us that he was going away for some days; he said *Vale*, and suiting the action to the word, he left the school-room.

The morning passed slowly. At last the hour for recess struck, and we gladly hastened to the play-ground.

The play-ground was a wide strip of land surrounding the lawn. No grass was allowed to grow on it—it was shaded by tall elms.

The first class held a meeting in one corner, and Bob Boggs was elected chairman.

The remainder of the boys, their curiosity excited to the highest pitch by certain vague hints, impatiently awaited the result of this august body's deliberations. In the doctor's absence discipline was somewhat relaxed, and our time for recreation was lengthened.

The most important question was, How should we spend Wednesday evening? The majority voted for a play—so it was resolved that a drama should be performed in the study-hall.

This determination was made known to the other classes, and they loudly expressed their approbation. Everybody was delighted. It was no wonder—for we had all seen plays during the holidays, and in consequence, we were stage-struck.

The next day was Sunday. We had several hours to ourselves on that day, and we completed our plan.

Albert Bright, the head of the Rhetoric class, was engaged to write the play; but here a difficulty arose. Every boy wanted a conspicuous part. Now, it was impossible for our dramatist to write a play containing a hundred heroes. On being informed of this, a large number declared they would have nothing to do with the "concern," and seceded in a body.

Bob Boggs was in despair; but Albert Bright settled the matter by promising to put in plenty of soldiers and brigands—thus pacifying the malcontents.

Our author worked hard at the play. Much to Mr. Himm's surprise, he missed all his lessons on Monday, and he must have written during the night, for on Tuesday the drama was ready. At recess, on the same day, the parts were distributed.

That play was a magnificent affair! The hero was twice wounded by a poisoned arrow, thrice taken prisoner by the Turks, once cast from a precipice into the sea, and after all he came out alive and triumphant. A few assassinations, captures by robbers, and daring rescues, with innumerable sword-combats, fell to the lot of the minor characters, so everybody was satisfied.

Albert Bright was to be Isoline de Belvidere, the lovely heroine; Bob Boggs, Ali Mustapha, the cruel tyrant; and the part of Sir Roland Rougemont, the invincible hero, fell to me. My speeches were not very hard to learn, as they consisted chiefly of such phrases as, "I defy thee, tyrant," "Beware, minion," "What, ho! varlet, &c."

On Tuesday night, after Mr. Himm had gone to bed, we had a grand rehearsal, but unluckily he heard the noise of our spouting, and we were nearly discovered—only escaping from the hall by rapid flight.

Bob Boggs was a capital manager. He could coax as well as command; he made the most of his resources. All our properties were hidden in a ruined summer-house that stood in the garden.

Four sheets, surreptitiously obtained from the dormitory, and fastened together, were to form the curtain. A number of boys spent their recess each day painting large sheets of packing-paper for scenery. The paint had been procured for a consideration from some men who were engaged in renovating the doctor's rooms.

Had the doctor been in Mr. Himm's place, his sharp eyes would have noticed our unusual excitement, without doubt; but Mr. Himm was so deeply absorbed in maintaining his elegant repose of manner, that he noticed nothing uncommon, except that we had been lately very dull about our lessons. There was no fear of the servants' telling, for, having received invitations, they were anticipating the fun.

On Wednesday morning Bob entered the recitation-room with a very long face.

"What's the matter, *mon ami*?" asked Albert Bright—Albert, by-the-way, was rather fond of airing his French.

"Ah," sighed Bob, "it's all up. Mr. Himm won't give a supper to-night, after all!"

If we had been girls, we'd have fainted.

"Yes," continued Bob, "all our plans are disarranged. The supper won't take place till Saturday."

We breathed again. It was not so bad as we had expected.

"It's so much the better," said Albert, "we'll have more time for preparation. The only thing I regret is we'll have no audience but the servants."

"Oh, don't you fret," said Bob, "I am going to invite the Mrs. Popkins and their young ladies."

Had he proposed to invite the President and his Cabinet, we could not have been more astonished. The Misses Popkins kept an academy for young ladies. We often met the academy walking out; but the young ladies generally turned up their noses or giggled, and sometimes they made unflattering remarks about us in passing, which was not pleasant. The elder Miss Popkins looked sharp and severe, but the younger one seemed nice.

Bob silenced all our objections, and a politely worded note was sent to the Misses Popkins, inviting them to our play.

After the note had been given to the gardener to be delivered to the Misses Popkins, a sudden fear seized Albert Bright.

"Suppose," said he, "the ladies should arrive before Mr. Himm starts for the Hen and Chickens!"

The mere thought of such a dilemma was too terrible to be entertained, so we did not entertain it.

When we came to think about costumes for the actors, then came the tug of war. "Making up" the heroine's complexion was difficult indeed. After many experiments the Lady Isoline was made beautiful by the aid of red ink and chalk; her flowing robe was a cotton gown, rather the worse for wear, borrowed from the cook.

In the dress department Bob's genius shone resplendent. He proved to be the right boy in the right place. Caps, jackets and coats were converted by him into very theatrical looking articles. There was an old rooster on the premises; the day after our play that antiquated biped had scarcely a single feather left on him: the brigands had worn them in their hats. Strips of tin became glittering swords and daggers; pieces of gilded paper, found in various trunks, formed sumptuous decorations for the actors, and served to turn common dishes into gold and silver ones for the banquet scene.

An old pair of foils were given to myself and the principal villain, as we were expected to do an extra amount of fencing, but the minor characters had to be content with tin weapons.

Old Brown, the gardener, owned a dilapidated horse; this animal was nearly as old as his master. In the final scene of our drama Sir Roland Rougemont was to rescue the lovely Isoline from Ali Mustapha and his savage minions. Now, Albert Bright declared that it was absolutely necessary that Sir Roland should be mounted, and the interposing Boggs at once determined that old Brown's quadruped should represent Sir Roland's fiery steed.

Saturday came. It was a half-holiday. We worked like bees. Bob and I were practicing with old Brown's Dapple. We were in the meadow at the back of the academy.

"It's no use, Bob," said I, "I can't sit on Dapple, 'brandishing my sword and supporting the Lady Isoline' at the same time. Why, the Lady Isoline weighs a hundred and fifty at least!"

"It's hard," returned Bob, after reflecting a moment. "I guess we'll have to tie you on the horse—it's the only way."

I assented. At this moment Dulcimer Deets came up. Dulcimer was a dull boy: he never learned anything; he was kept at school because they couldn't manage him at home. Our orchestra consisted of two flutes, a cracked violin, and a pair of bones, or clappers. Dulcimer played the bones.

"Say, Boggs," he exclaimed, "I want to play a solo on my instruments. I want to distinguish myself."

Deets received a box of good things from home nearly every week, and Bob did not wish to offend him by a point blank refusal.

"You might have a solo, Deets," he answered, "but how would a solo on the *bones* look when placed on the programme?"

"Oh, as for that, you can call it some fine Latin or Greek name. The other day I heard Albert Bright say something in a foreign language about bones. Let me see—it was 'Pro bones—pro bo—'"

"*Pro bono publico*, perhaps."

"That's it! Will it do?"

"Yes." And Deets went away perfectly satisfied, while Bob grinned widely.

On Saturday night, or evening rather, Mr. Himm did not wait to see us to bed. Before seven o'clock had struck he left the academy for the Hen and Chickens. No sooner had the door closed after him than we rushed to the study-hall. We did a great deal in a short time. In three quarters of an hour everything was ready. The curtain was nailed up, with six tallow candles (the footlights,) burning before it. About eight o'clock the Misses Popkins led in their young ladies. The girls looked pretty in their white dresses and blue ribbons. We actors made holes in the curtain to look at them. I saw the Misses Popkins looking round for our teachers.

Several boys dressed in their best suits acted as ushers, and distributed the programmes, which were fine specimens of penmanship. Here is a copy of one:

GRAND DRAMATIC ENTERTAINMENT,

GIVEN BY THE

PUPILS OF HICKORY HILL ACADEMY.

On this occasion the manager, Mr. R. Augustus Boggs, begs leave to present to an enlightened and discriminating public a new drama written by Mr. Albert Bright. This drama (thought by some critics to be superior to anything of Shakspear'se,) is entitled,

ISOLINE DE BELVIDERE;

OR,

MADNESS, MURDER AND MYSTERY.

The piece will be produced with an unequalled cast, novel effects, new music, realistic scenery, sumptuous costumes, and all the resources of the company will be used to produce the

Unsurpassable splendor of Oriental Magnificence!

In scene IV., a

LIVING HORSE!!!

Will be introduced.

Overture.....Orchestra
Chorus of Brigands.....Pupils
King Richard Coeur de Lion.....J. John Smithson
Sir Roland Rougemont.....William Hallet
Ali Mustapha, the terrible tyrant of the tottering tower.....R. Augustus Boggs
Lady Isoline.....Albert Bright
Courtiers, Knights, Soldiers, Brigands, Peasants, &c.
Instrumental Solo......"Pro bono publico,"

DULCIMER DEETS.

Chorus of soldiers.....Pupils

At last everything was ready. The horrid din of the overture ceased. Bob Boggs rang the dinner bell violently, and the curtain drew up just far enough to show the feet of the brigands. There it stopped. Another tug, and it flapped about the heads of the chorus. The audience began to giggle, and the elder Miss Popkins said, "Hush!" Redoubled force was applied, and it ascended quite smoothly.

The play began. The girls seemed greatly interested—especially in the scene where Sir Roland promises, kneeling, to be faithful to the Lady Isoline unto death, and the terrible tyrant rushes in with a band of turbaned soldiers to capture the lovers. Whereupon Sir Roland defends his lady love, and is finally captured, to the sound of distant thunder, (produced by boys in their heaviest boots, jumping at the back of the stage.)

We had come to the thrilling fourth scene. I dashed on the stage, sword in hand, tied on old Dapple's back. I was about to seize Isoline, and place her before me in the saddle, as the stage-directions required, when the animal took fright, and sprang from the stage among the audience.

The girls screamed, and a panic ensued. By old Dapple's sudden movement I had lost my balance, and I now hung helplessly by the cords that had been passed around my waist and fastened to the saddle.

The horse ran up and down the aisles between the rows of desks. Before any one had attempted to stop him, the door suddenly opened, and the doctor walked into this scene of confusion.

Old Dapple was approaching Mr. Himm's high desk. As he passed it my head struck against one of its sharp corners. I felt a sudden pain, and then I knew no more until I opened my eyes in the doctor's room, and saw the kind face of the younger Miss Popkins bending over me.

I lay ill with a fever for two weeks. Miss Popkins—Rosa was her name—took good care of me during that time. Doctor Arthur had an opportunity of seeing the gentleness and sweetness of her disposition. He was an old bachelor, but he managed to screw up courage to ask *the* question, and before another year had passed, he was a married man—and Miss Rosa Popkins had changed her name and title.

Mr. Himm nearly fainted when he saw Doctor Arthur on his return from that supper. Bob confessed all, but the doctor, much to his surprise, forgave him and his companions, and through their intercession Mr. Himm's neglect of duty was also pardoned.

After the doctor's marriage the academy flourished under a milder rule than before that event, for Mrs. Arthur helped to govern the institution.

As we boys grew older we saw many fine plays, but the remembrance of the finest of them, gives us less pleasure than the reminiscence of our drama at Hickory Hill.

"OUR JIM."

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST,

BY ETHEL DANE.

We were sitting in the school-room one day, during the hour of noon, wondering musingly where our life boat, that we were trying so hard to steer in the smooth currents, would finally cast anchor.

While we were thus engaged, two little hands stole round our neck, and a voice whispered ever so shy,

"Teacher, our Jim is married!"

"Is he indeed!" we rejoined. "And who did he marry, pray?"

"A Miss Cornell. And oh, teacher, she's so awfully proud, you ought to see her. She's heaps of dresses and jewels and rings; and the beautifullest curls you ever saw. But Kate says she takes 'em off every night and don't sleep in 'em. And she done this way with her fan all the time, when me gave the home reception," and the little mimic flirted and waved her hand in the most approved style. "But I don't like her a bit."

"There! there! Belle dear, it is wrong to say that."

"Well, I don't, nor ma don't either, and I'll tell your why. Ma says she's a fashionable woman, and can't work, so they are are going to board in the city, like grand people do. And I suppose after a while, Jim will be grand too, and won't carry me on his shoulder, or let me ride on his foot any more. It's mean, her takin' our Jim away from us, so it is, too!"

And the little head dropped down on our shoulder, while the bright tear drops fell sparkling like so many diamonds. Taking the child in our arms, we let her cry out her sorrow, knowing full well the value of tears in such a case, and also the value of loving arms to cry in.

Presently the brief storm passed by, and the little cloudlets gave way to smiles and sunshine.

And she skipped away, giving her playmates triumphant descriptions of the wonderful things Miss Cornell—otherwise Mrs. Jim—possessed.

"Our Jim" was big brother in the establishment where Belle lived. And really it wasn't much wonder the little sister objected to his being taken off, as she expressed it. He was a tall, robust, muscular man, accustomed only to the plain quiet life of a farmer, and we wondered greatly why he had chosen a fashionable wife.

His father, William Graham, possessed little besides the farm on which he lived, and that no more than sufficed for the wants of the moderately large family of which he was the head.

Jim owned three hundred dollars, the savings from fields of grain that he had sowed and reaped with care—knowing the proceeds were to replenish his own scant purse.

With that modest sum the young bride and groom went to the city, and engaged boarding at one of the most expensive hotels. As nothing less grand would suit the exquisite taste of Arabella—Christian name for Mrs. Jim Graham.

With the addition of two or three suits to the "heaps of dresses" Belle had admired, and the payment of a few weeks boarding, the money had almost vanished. Then commenced a frantic search on the part of the groom for work.

Merchants, clerks and business men of all descriptions, were beseechingly entreated for something to do. But times were dull, and there were others far more competent for standing in the salesroom than he, so others were chosen to the places of trust that our Jim longed to fill.

Finally the landlord, gaining a clue to affairs, politely informed them they had better seek boarding elsewhere; when the crest-fallen Jim, and highly outraged Arabella, removed to cheaper apartments.

Again a still more frantic search ending as before, and our Jim gave up in despair, half tempted to commit suicide, and end the life that was fast becoming intolerable. For being the soul of honor, it was difficult to complacently face the landlady while eating the food she had furnished, knowing he had no means to liquidate his indebtedness.

A few weeks later little Belle, with her same shy voice, asked pleadingly:

"Teacher, may I go over to Mayward's field?

"What is there, child, for you to see?"

Nothing to *see*, but our Jim is there a huskin' corn, and I want to share my dinner with him."

"Yes, go on," we replied.

And glancing through the window we saw her, bonnet in one hand, dinner bucket in the other, running and skipping, shouting with joy.

"Oh, Jim, Jim, I'm coming!"

Reaching him panting and breathless, he stooped down, taking the little sister up in his arms and kissed her repeatedly. And we could almost imagine tears were in both eyes.

Girls, while looking at that strong man, we confess that for one moment we blushed for the *useless* ones of our sex.

On the one hand was the fashionable wife, pounding and thumping on a hired piano, too indolent to share her portion of the burthen of life; while on the other was the young husband reduced to his last dime, almost disconsolate from his tireless search in the city for employment, now "a husking corn" to sustain that fashionable woman in her idleness.

Not but what corn-husking is as honorable an employment as selling yards of silk or calico behind a counter.

Finally winter came, and neither work on farm or in city could be obtained: when the hospitable doors of the father's house were thrown open, and they returned—not quite as prodigal children—but undoubtedly receiving as warm a reception as the wanderer of old, when the fatted calf was slain in honor of his return.

Poor Jim was thankful for such a haven of rest and comfort. But Arabella could not endure such a life. She fretted and raved and fumed, keeping the household in a state similar to a young Vesuvius by her wailings and discontent. Her beautiful curls were thrown aside, also her jewels and fine dresses; and in an untidy wrapper she gradually developed into an eyesore for all that beheld her.

Wasn't she a glorious helpmate for one beginning in life? And is it any wonder the boyish, laughing, rollicking Jim changed into a morose, silent man, hating the life he dared not end?

Spring came at last, and with it they commenced housekeeping. But Arabella could not soil her delicate hands with housework, so hired help was inevitable, and thus the years dragged on.

"Our Jim" is not a fictitious character, and he is only a representation of scores and hundreds of others who are clogged in a similar manner, dragging through months and weary years a burthen that scarce can be borne, until death or a divorce gives them release, and they escape with a fervent "Thank God, I'm free from thraldom."

These are strong words, we admit, but there are cases that justify them.

A word to girls before we leave the subject. Marry if you will—and heaven bless you with good husbands if you do—but don't be fashionable wives.

If you find a husband at the foot of the hill of life, stand beside him, and go hand-in-hand together until you reach the summit. If he is at the top, *keep him there*, and don't send him down—through your folly or extravagance—to end his days in poverty. If his salary is small, and jewels or costly apparel are requisite for your happiness, earn them yourself: and don't fetter him down to weary days of aching toil for outward adorning.

Be willing occasionally to put *your* shoulder to the matrimonial wheel, and see if your tact and ingenuity will not make matters run more smoothly.

Lend a helping hand, as well as cheerful words, and the life you will enter "for better and for worse," will develop into something bright and beautiful in the end.

And when the competence is gained, you can rest in the consciousness that your hands have helped win the victory.

☞ A Washington correspondent flows over the tin in this style: "Did you hear of that chap who attended the sale of a hotel recently at a town in Ohio? He hadn't a cent in his pocket, but he stood up and bid boldly, 'Twenty-eight thousand dollars.' It was knocked down to him, and when the question was asked, 'Who is the purchaser?' this audacious scamp replied, 'The Pennsylvania Railroad.' Of course he was not required in person to put up the money from an imperial foyer like that, whereby he was able, in the course of a couple of days, to sell the whole to another party for forty-two thousand dollars, and clear the difference. The country is now full of scamps buying hotels for the Pennsylvania Railroad."

☞ "We are very glad to learn that the marriage of Mr. Raghoonath das Madhowdas, a Kapado Bania merchant of Bombay, with Dhanoorbai, the daughter of Sheth Gindhurdas Mohundas, and the widow of Lukmichund Dhurumsey, was celebrated at Chinchpooly." Jaws hurt much?

☞ The Indianapolis Sentinel thus relieves itself: "Eighteen souls with nine single thoughts, eighteen hearts that beat as nine, at Evansville last week." If these were marriages it would have been more judicious with the editor's knowledge of Indiana nature, to have deferred his cracking elucidation. If they were divorces, he ought to be ashamed of himself.

☞ A Sack county, Iowa, horse tried to scratch his nose with his hind foot, the other day, caught his head in the halter, gave a jerk, and broke his neck.

☞ Miss Phebe L——n once asked Sir David Brewster to contribute some lines to her album. In vain did the philosopher protest that verse-making was not his forte. The lady would accept no excuse. So Sir David snatched a pen and wrote:

Phebe,
Ye be,
Hebe.
D. B.

☞ A young German architect in Chicago has drawn a plan whereby the great fire shall be commemorated. His design is to erect in one of the public parks a tower about 100 feet in height, which shall be surmounted by a Phœnix—the tower to be built with blocks of stone or bricks taken from the prominent buildings destroyed by the fire. On each of these blocks the names of the building from the ruins of which it was taken is to be conspicuously engraved. That all these names may be seen by the curious of future years, the top of the tower is to be reached by an exterior winding stairway.

☞ Who but one that had been there could have given expression to this scandalous bit of realistic cynicism? "Now is the time to rally to the festive donation party. A donation party is a cheerful gathering, where a poor clergyman's flock overwhelm him with load watch-pockets, and eat up about $112 worth of his winter provisions.

NEWS OF THE WEEK.

A YOUNG LADY'S THROAT CUT WITH THE CORE OF AN APPLE.

The New York Sun says:—Miss Mary Ellen Foy, the young lady whose throat was cut by the core of an apple in the Normal School a few days ago, is dying. She was eating the apple, and, while in the act of swallowing a portion of the core, it cut the lining of her throat and several of the arteries, like a knife. Her class-mates were astonished to see her fall over on the floor and vomit large quantities of blood. She was carried to the police station, but little could be done for her beyond keeping her perfectly quiet. Her mother, who had been summoned, was not allowed to remove her until next morning, for fear of fatal consequences. The poor woman sat in the station-house watching her daughter all night. Next day she took her home, where she has lain ever since, slowly wasting away. It is impossible for her to swallow anything whatever, and her stomach has become so contracted that nothing can enter it. She is so weak, from loss of blood and starvation, that the physicians in attendance refuse to perform any operation on her, or even to insert a silver feeding tube below the wound, as has been successfully done in other instances where the mouth or throat have been injured. They say that she could not survive an instant. She was a bright, amiable young woman, very much esteemed and beloved by all her acquaintances.

ANOTHER TRUNK MYSTERY.

QUEBEC, Dec. 26.—A trunk mystery causes great excitement in this city. The other day a box was found at the Grand Trunk Railway depot containing the mutilated body of a woman in a partially decayed condition. The limbs had been cut off, and the flesh hacked off in lumps for convenience of packing. The box had been left behind by a stranger, who had crossed the river in a ferry boat. His name is unknown. Foul play is suspected, and the authorities are busy investigating the matter.

A SNOW-BIRD MATCH.—A snow-bird match was shot December 22, between Captain Bogardus, champion shot of the United States, and James Ward, of Toronto. Ward shot sixty-six birds out of one hundred, and Bogardus sixty-five. Much dissatisfaction was expressed at the result, as either man could have done much better.

CINCINNATI, Dec. 23.—Jesse R. Grant's condition is improving, and it is now thought he will recover.

ITEMS.

SAN FRANCISCO, Dec. 20.—Wong Haly, son of the late president of the Ning Yang Company, was buried to-day with Celestial ceremonies; nearly one hundred Chinese were in the line, with twenty hired mourners and five wagon loads of provisions and flowers.

Alexis reached Cleveland on the night of Dec. 26, and was received at the depot by the Mayor and a committee of citizens, and was serenaded later in the evening. He will arrive at St. Louis on Jan. 5th, and is to have a grand reception there.

Catanazy has gone to Washington to join his family there. He is quietly winding up his private affairs preparatory to his departure for Europe.

The evidence on the prosecution in the case of Mrs. Wharton, on trial at Annapolis for the murder of General Ketchum by the administration of poison, closed Dec. 27th, and the defence opened.

Garroters have appeared at Salt Lake City. Two persons have been garroted there within the week.

Small pox is said to be decreasing in Cincinnati.

The Russian fleet is ordered to remain in the harbor of New York for the present.

In California the weather continues warm and rainy, and the grass is growing rapidly.

FOREIGN NEWS.

THE PRINCE OF WALES'S SICKNESS.

A correspondent of a New York paper gives the following interesting account of the Prince's sickness:—

In every place of worship (Jew and Gentile) there were special prayers for the royal sufferer. In the Roman Catholic churches in England it is the rule that after the mass and before the *Pater Noster* and the three *Ave*s said by the priest and the congregation, the officiating priest, standing in front of the altar, shall say a prayer for the Queen. On the Sunday when the royal sufferer's disease was at its worst, in addition to this prayer was read a special petition for the recovery of the Prince, prescribed by the order of the Archbishop. In the churches of the establishment something similar was done. But that afternoon they heard news that compelled them once more to fear that the Prince was "past praying for," so far as saving his life was concerned. The five o'clock bulletin was anxiously waited for; it arrived about six, and it was read with grief. Then, after nine hours of waiting, came this:

SANDRINGHAM, Dec. 11—1.30 A. M.—The Prince has had a little sleep. The symptoms are unchanged.

CONSULTATION—A CHANGE OF TREATMENT.—This was the last official bulletin of that night; but meanwhile the private despatches and the letters of the special correspondents had arrived and were sent to me. Some of them were very interesting. To begin with, it transpired that on Saturday night the three physicians in attendance on the Prince had called into consultation another eminent brother, and that the result of that consultation was a change in the treatment, milk being substituted for the brandy and other stimulus with which the patient had been sustained up to that time. It was also ascertained that the statement made that one of his lungs "was gone" was erroneous, and that the still more fatal report that "perforation of the bowels" had occurred was false. But it was true that the lungs of the patient were greatly congested. Since Friday morning there had not been any real recovery of strength, but only alternations of tranquility and respite from the weight of the inflammation of the lungs. The Prince would occasionally have a violent paroxysm, which would end in vomiting; this would give him relief, and he would fall into a slumber. At intervals he would be conscious for a few moments, and then his mind would suddenly cease to act. But on Sunday morning, between eight and eleven o'clock, the Prince seemed to be really better.

THE PRINCESS AT WORSHIP.—The Princess, whose composure and resignation throughout the whole of her trouble has been wonderful, determined to go to church and pray for her husband. The church is not very far from Sandringham House, and is reached by a path running through the private grounds. At nine o'clock the Princess sent the following note to the Rev. Luke Onslow, vicar of Sandringham and chaplain to the Prince:

"My husband is better, and I am coming to church. I must watch with my husband, and, therefore must leave before the end of the service. Cannot you say a few words for him in prayers early in the service, that I may join with you in prayer for him?"

And at 11 o'clock the poor Princess, simply dressed and attended by two of her suite, came walking over the snow along the path, and entered the little church. The chaplain, immediately after her arrival, and before reading the collects of the day, announced that he was about to offer up a special prayer for the Prince, and the congregation, falling on their knees, then joined in the petition.

The Princess remained on her knees for some moments after this prayer had been pronounced, and then left the church to hasten to the bedside of her supposed dying husband. Soon after she re-entered the house the Duke of Cambridge, the Duke of Edinburg, Prince Arthur and Prince Leopold, who had remained in the sick room until her return, came to the church and said their prayers.

Shortly after noon the Prince again grew worse, and during the whole of the afternoon the greatest alarm prevailed.

In the afternoon her Majesty the Queen went out riding. Upon her return she was informed that the prince was worse; she went to his room; it was then four o'clock, and in a few moments afterwards the Prince opened his eyes, recognized his mother for the first time since her arrival, and spoke to her. At eight o'clock his suffering was so great that it was believed he could not survive more than a few moments, and the whole family were collected in the room in expectation of his immediate death. But the paroxysm passed off, and he slept until ten, when another paroxysm occurred, which was not quite so severe.

The latest accounts from Sandringham report that the Prince is still improving, though his convalescence is retarded by a painful affection above the left hip, accompanied by feverishness. No inquietude is felt as to his condition, but regret and disappointment at the slowness of his recovery are generally expressed. Hopes had been raised that the Prince would be able to go out before the end of the holidays, and preparations for public rejoicing had been made. The non-realization of these expectations has thrown a damper on the festivities of the season.

THE FAMINE IN PERSIA STILL CONTINUES.

The horror of the famine in Persia has not yet reached its climax. Major S. A Smith assistant resident, writing from Bushire, says the people are worn to skeletons, the children "to famished beasts," and some of them are always trodden down and killed in the daily rush for the English rice. Mr. A. J. S. Adams, travelling in Teheran about two months ago, says, in a note published by the Sunderland Times, that in the crowds who swarm in the barrack squares to receive a dole of small silver from the shah, hundreds—men and women—are literally stark naked, worn to the bone, and covered with sores. The people follow the visitor howling for bread; "two men lie upon the ground, quite dead, and a third is laid upon one side of the bazzar, covered with a piece of dirty cotton. A naked woman lies in the agony of death, surrounded by a crowd of beings almost as badly off as herself. The next form is that of a woman, who scrapes from the ground a handful of melon-seed and filth, which she divides between her two children." This is one morning's ride. There is no help for any of them.

RUSSIA.

ST. PETERSBURG, Dec. 26.—An Imperial decree appears in print to-day, fixing the conscription for the Russian army for the year 1872 at six men in every one thousand.

NEW PUBLICATIONS.

PLEASURE. A Holiday Book of Prose and Verse. Published by D. Appleton & Co., New York; and also for sale by Claxton, Remsen & Haffelfinger, Philada. A collection of short stories and poems, suitable for Christmas reading. A quaint design in colors decorates the cover.

THE DOCTOR'S DAUGHTER. By SOPHIE MAY, author of "Little Prudy Stories," etc. Illustrated. Published by Lee & Shepard, Boston; Lee, Shepard & Dillingham, New York; and also for sale by Claxton, Remsen & Haffelfinger, Philada. Good—worth buying.

BIVOUAC AND BATTLE; OR, THE STRUGGLES OF A SOLDIER. By OLIVER OPTIC, author of "Young America Abroad," "The Army and Navy Stories," "The Boat Club Stories," etc. With fourteen illustrations. Published by Lee & Shepard, Boston; Lee, Shepard & Dillingham, New York; and also for sale by Claxton, Remsen & Haffelfinger, Philada.

AUNT MADGE'S STORY. By SOPHIE MAY, author of "Little Prudy Stories," etc. Illustrated. Published by Lee & Shepard, Boston; Lee, Shepard & Dillingham, New York; and also for sale by Claxton, Remsen & Haffelfinger, Philada.

DAVID COPPERFIELD. By CHAS. DICKENS. One of the "Handy Volume" edition. Published by D. Appleton & Co., New York; and also for sale by Claxton, Remsen & Haffelfinger, Philada.

RUBY DUKE. By Mrs. H. K. POTEVIN. Published by Lee & Shepard, Boston; Lee, Shepard & Dillingham, New York; and also for sale by Claxton, Remsen & Haffelfinger, Philada.

APPLETON'S JOURNAL. Monthly Part for December. A first class number, crowded with illustrations and good reading matter. Published by D. Appleton & Co., New York.

LIPPINCOTT'S MAGAZINE for January, 1872, contains "Scrambles Among the Alps," "Christmas Carol," "Shadows of a Christmas Fire," "Types of Castilian Vagrancy," etc., etc. Published by J. B. Lippincott & Co., Philada.

THE GALAXY for January, 1872, contains "Archbishop Manning," "Fifteen Years a Shakeress," "My Life on the Plains," "Milan and the Italian Lakes," "What She Said in Her Song," etc., etc. Published by Sheldon & Co., New York.

☞ A young Indianapolis lady, sick with consumption, was told that if she would get a young puppy and raise it, the animal would take the disease off her hands, and she would get well. She did so, and as the dog grew it was noticed that he acquired a hacking cough while the young lady grew rapidly better. In the meantime, however, she had become much attached to her canine benefactor, and did everything that could be done for him. It was of no use: the emaciated beast soon shuffled off, and the young lady now is in robust health. The question is, would Bergh approve of such a remedy?

☞ Some time since an inventor applied to the Patent Office for a patent for a new process of embalming, and in order to comply with the supposed requirements of the law, that a model be deposited in the office, he prepared a neat little coffin, with a glass face, in which he deposited the remains of a tiny infant, which had been embalmed by his process. It being considered not desirable to make the Patent Office a catacomb, the model was returned to the inventor for burial.

☞ A strange exhibition of histrionic sensitiveness took place recently at the opera-house in Geneva, Switzerland. Gounod's Faust was performed, and one Mlle. Dufaure sang "Marguerite." During the first act the other singers won more applause than she. This mortified her so much that she refused to go on the stage in the second act. A novel scene now ensued. The manager stepped before the curtain and said that Mlle. Dufaure refused to sing because the audience discriminated against her in the applause. He appealed to the gentlemen to do better toward her. Some laughed and refused, but most of the audience promised to gratify her. So she reappeared. A storm of applause greeted her. She wept tears of joy. Renewal of the applause. The other actors now grew jealous in their turn, and refused to play. So the manager had to dismiss the audience and refund the money.

☞ One of the Siamese twins is still lying at the point of death at their home in North Carolina; the other is in good health. In anticipation of death, arrangements have been made for the immediate separation of the living from the dead brother.

ITEMS OF INTEREST.

☞ Walking-sticks—Promenading swells.

☞ You "put a head" on a letter when you apply the postage-stamp.

☞ A good name for a street railway conductor is "Oz-car."

☞ Chewing blue collar-paper nearly killed a little Vermont girl.

☞ An Atlanta lover bought off his rival for $20.

☞ The origin of wine, like man's, should be referred to monkeys, since it is undoubtedly gray apes, (grapes).

☞ Compulsory education is the order in Illinois. The youthful aspirant for knowledge is encouraged with such cheerful inscriptions as, "Behave, or get your neck broke;" "Learn or die," written in large letters over the door of the school-room.

☞ An outer garment called the Galitzin is much admired by ladies. Our sex generally prefers the gal that's in it.

☞ A schoolmistress at Green Bay, Wisconsin, rides to school every day in a hand-sled, drawn by the big boys.

☞ The latest London announcement is a nose machine, by which homely noses are pressed into the most fashionable shape, according to the taste of the owner.

☞ The Chicago Republican, unable to appreciate poetry of the highest order, cruelly says of a recent "fire poet" that, if anybody knows this poet and will kill him, it will cheerfully publish the obituary notice free.

"Going to press"—About to call on one's sweetheart. "Locking up"—Putting one's arms around her.

☞ An impecunious Bostonian in the West, wishing to obtain transportation to his native heaths free gratis for nothing, delivered himself up to the Galena (Ills.) authorities as the murderer of a Hub policeman, and was forthwith forwarded in that character to his desired destination.

☞ A Texas paper says:—"We have been asked why we stopped publishing the list of marriage licenses issued by the clerk. Because a great big stand-up-in-the-mud out there in the sand-hills said we published his daughter as married, when she weren't, and that he would hit us on the head hard enough to knock our ankles out of joint for it. Is the explanation satisfactory?"

☞ The Herald has capped the climax of journalistic enterprise by sending a reporter to interview Dr. Livingstone. If he succeeds in his mission there will no longer be any refuge from impertinent curiosity on the face of the earth.

☞ A California man requested his wife, in a ball-room, to hold the baby of another man's wife while he danced with baby's mother—but she didn't hold it. Some wives are too disobedient to put up with!

☞ Our lynx-eyed assistants report this morning that 1,743 people slipped down yesterday on the perfidious sidewalks. Of these, 1,140 were men, 403 women, and 200 miscellaneous. The table shows that over 300 landed on their elbows, the others sat down. Of the entire number, 1,743 of them swore, 131 audibly.

☞ A Chicago clergyman having preached from the text, "Where are the Nine?" the Post replies:—"Most of them are with the Haymakers—and the rest have gone to grass."

☞ Enoch Ardens are becoming painfully numerous.

☞ At French aristocratic weddings, the bride is invariably dressed in the simplest manner, the groom in frock-coat, light pants, and gloves.

☞ On being discovered in a hen-coop, a Connecticut thief explained that he was trying to find Encke's comet. He saw "stars" directly.

☞ Nilsson has told a certain New York belle, "You sing as well as I do."

☞ Rumor has it that a beautiful Hartford young lady not yet out of her teens has declined six offers of marriage. If this is so she should be called a slay-belle for wringing so many hearts.

☞ At Rochester calico balls the men wear calico pantaloons.

☞ "Consider Glass" is the name of a Boston painter and glazier.

☞ Garrison says that the woman question was "an all-embracing" one. Who said it wasn't?

☞ The Grand Duke is accompanied in his travels by a brilliant staff of officers, who stick about him on all occasions; among them are Gen. Orloff Foralaski, Col. Skihi Rockettaff, Major Sneesyuhedoff, Count Aduzendrinksin, Admiral Hawgenpigeti, and Count Catscrazy.

☞ A Norwegian lady has arrived in Milwaukee with some twenty of her children. She says there are so many accidents she didn't think it safe to bring them all on one boat, as in the case of a wreck she wouldn't have heart to commence life in a new country. She expects the rest of them shortly.

☞ A party of Fort Wayne young gentlemen dined sumptuously at a restaurant, and each one insisted on paying the bill. To decide the matter it was proposed to blindfold the waiter, and the first one he caught should pay the bill. He hasn't caught any of them yet.

☞ Foster, the biographer of Dickens, says that Boz worked in a blacking factory when he was a boy. Was it this that made him shine in literature afterwards?

☞ A minister, lecturing in East Boston recently, suddenly remembered that he had agreed to marry a couple at that very time. He stopped his lecture for fifteen minutes, fulfilled his agreement, married the happy couple, and returning finished his lecture.

☞ A Missouri musician sat down upon a keg of powder and began to smoke. They found one button.

☞ Refuge for an old Tragedian—A retired Hamlet.

☞ A California coroner was interrupted in his inquest by the corpse waking up.

☞ The Russians are said to be the best linguists and worst dancers in the world.

☞ Spurgeon has received ten offers of marriage within a year.

☞ Happy pairs now announce their engagement by leaving their cards together at the houses of their friends. So nice.

☞ A family was moving at the West a few days ago, and set a bureau out in the yard, which blew over, crushing to death a child of three years.

☞ A pair of horses brought twenty-five cents at private sale at Red Bank, N. J.

☞ In answer to the question—"Where is Boss Tweed to go?" the St. Louis Republican says: "As this paper is not addicted to profanity, we decline giving an opinion."

☞ "We have no room for all this," said a night-editor, glancing despairingly at a two-column obituary; "it must be cut down to a proper die-mention."

☞ A young lady wrote to the Postmaster General, complaining of the irregularity of the males, stating that her beau hadn't been to see her for two nights.

☞ A story is told of a certain man and his wife who were almost always quarrelling. During their quarrels, their only child (a boy) was generally present, and of course heard many of his father's expressions. One day, when the boy had been doing something wrong, the mother, intending to chastise him, called him, and said, "Come here, sir; what did you do that for?" The boy, complacently folding his arms, and imitating his father's manner, said, "See here, madam, I don't wish to have any words with you!"

☞ William Shakspeare lives in Alabama, and is celebrated as a successful mellow drammer.

THEY READ BUT DON'T PAY.

"It not unfrequently occurs, when persons are asked if they will subscribe for a local newspaper, or if they already take it, that they reply—'No, but neighbor B. takes it, and *I have the reading of it every week.*' They are *benefitted every week* by the toils, perplexities, and expenditures of those who receive nothing from them in return."

The above truth, clipped from an exchange, should be copied and re-copied in every country paper, until the trouble is abated. The publisher of a newspaper, depending, as he does in a measure, upon his subscription list for support, naturally expects each family who desire to read his paper to subscribe for it, if they can afford it. Subscribers themselves, as well as publishers, find the newspaper borrower a first-class nuisance, for he often borrows it as the owner is about to read it, and too often, if he returns it at all, the paper is in such a condition that no one of nice sensibilities would care to read it. We would suggest that in towns where the nuisance has become intolerable, the publisher print, when requested, or stamp in large letters above the heading, "Subscribers not permitted to lend this paper," or, "This edition not for borrowers." The idea would take with subscribers, and prove a gentle hint to the meanest of all misery-makers.—*American Newspaper Reporter.*

ANYTHING pertaining to Russia being in order just now, we venture to reproduce the following lines on the retreat of Napoleon from Moscow, written by Southey in 1813. They serve to show the curiosities of what might be called Muscovite "cognomenclature," and that even a poet laureate has made some rather weak puns:

"The Russians they stuck close to him
All on the road to Moscow,
There was Tarmasow and Jemalow,
And all the others that end in ow;
Melarodovitch and Jaladovitch
And Karatschovitch,
And all the others that end in itch;
Schamschoff, Souchoneff
And Schouskoff,
And all the others that end in off;
Rajeffsky and Neverffsky
And Rieffsky,
And all the others that end in effsky;
Ostcharoffsky and Rostoffsky;
And all the others that end in offsky;
And Platoff he played them off,
And Shouvaloff he shovelled them off,
And Markoff he marked them off,
And Krasnoff he crossed them off,
And Tuchnoff he touched them off,
And Borosknff he bored them off,
And Kutouskoff he cut them off,
And Parenzoff he pared them off,
And Worronzoff he warried them off,
And Doctoroff he doctored them off,
And Rodionoff flogged them off,
And last of all an admiral came,
A terrible man with a terrible name,
A name which you all know by sight very well,
But which no one can speak and no one spell."

☞ When the water was recently cut off so suddenly in Boston on account of the formation of ice, the milkman heard great complaint from their customers because of the unnatural thickness of the milk. They comforted them with the assurance that the thing should not happen again.

☞ As the passengers were preparing to leave their seats on the arrival of the New York train in Boston the other evening, an old gentleman picked up a dark object which appeared to drop from a lady's bonnet. "Madam, is this yours? You appear to have dropped it by accident." "Thank you, sir," (placing her hand to her head—"a railroad accident—a misplaced switch."

☞ The favorite bird with the baby is its little crow.

PHILADELPHIA CATTLE MARKET.

The supply of Beef Cattle during the past week amounted to about 1118 head, and sold at 7½@8½c. 150 Cows brought $40@55 ₩ head. Sheep—14,000 head were disposed of at 4@6½c. ₩ lb. 4136 Hogs sold at $6,50@7 ₩ 100 lbs net.

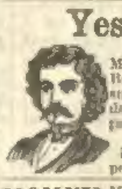
RATES OF ADVERTISING.

Thirty cents a line for the first insertion.

Twenty cents for each additional insertion.

☞ Payment is required in advance.

Yes, It Is True!



One Package of PROF. HALL'S MAGIC COMPOUND will force the Beard to grow thick and heavy on the smoothest face (without injury) in 21 days, or money refunded; 25 cents a package, post-paid; three for 50c.
EDGAR JONES, Ashland, Mass.
☞ Beware of parties offering a compound at the same price. ja6-1t

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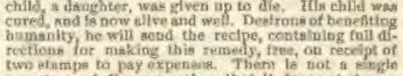

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WIT AND HUMOR.

IRISH WIT AND BLUNDERS.

An Irishman told his friend that he had defended him, the night before, against the abuse of his enemy.

"What did the scoundrel say of me?" said his friend.

"He said that you were not fit to carry garbage to a bear."

"Did he? I am glad you were there to defend me. What did you say?"

"Why, of course, I contradicted him in the flattest terms, and silenced him in a minute; for I declared most confidently *that you were.*"

"Pay me that six-and-eight-pence you owe me," said an Irish attorney to one of his clients.

"For what?"

"For the opinion you had of me."

"Faith, I never had any opinion of you in all my life."

An Irish girl told her forbidden lover she was longing to possess his portrait, and intended to obtain it.

"But how if your friends see it?" inquired he.

"Ah! but I'll tell the artist not to make it like you; so they won't know it."

"Now, Patrick," said a judge, "what do you say to the charge? Are you guilty, or not guilty?"

"Faith! but that's difficult for yer Honor to say, let alone meself. Wait till I hear the evidence."

An Irish drummer, who now and then indulged in a glass or two, was accosted by the inspecting-general, "What makes your face look so red?"

"Plase your Honor," said Pat, "I always blush when I spake to a general officer."

"Did your fall hurt you?" asked one Irishman of another who had fallen from a three-story building.

"Not in the laste, honey," replied the other; "but it was stopping so quick that injured me."

A gentleman who had conferred a favor upon an Irishman was thus addressed by him:—

"Long life to you, sir! With the blessing of God, may you live to eat the hen that scratches the gravel on your grave!"

BOUND TO HAVE HIS FARE.

Rev. Mr. F——, of Boston, who had accepted an invitation to preach out of town on a certain Sunday last winter, was delayed until the last moment, and did not arrive in the town until late in the morning of the day he was going to preach. He hastened to the clerk of the hotel and requested him to procure a carriage for him, which was complied with, and he was soon driven to the church, and got there with scarcely a moment to spare. He stepped from the conveyance and hurried up the aisle, when to his great surprise, he heard a suppressed tittering and a buzz of astonishment for which he could not account, until chancing to hear a footstep behind him, he turned and beheld the cause. The coachman, muffled to the chin, with fur cap on his head, a whip under his arm, and a pair of cavalry boots on his feet, had followed him into the church. The Rev. Mr. F—— was about to address him, when Jehu exclaimed: "Ye ain't paid me. I want my fare." The worthy minister, greatly mortified, tried to explain to him that he had requested the hotel clerk to settle with him. "Oh, yes," returned the hackman, "I dessay. That won't wash—it's too thin. Cash on delivery is my terms. I don't know you. I druv a fellow with a white necktie down to the cars last week, and he gave me the slip, and I ain't seen him since, and that time I made up my mind there wan't no virtue in white neckties; so cash up." It was growing very embarrassing, when the Hon. Richard Warren, a prominent member of the congregation, who was well acquainted with Mr. F——, hastened forward and settled the bill, whereupon John retreated, chuckling, and muttering to himself, "Too much for white necktie that time."

AN AFFIDAVIT.

A highwayman named Balland, confined in Newgate, sent for a solicitor to know how he could defer his trial, and was answered: "By getting an apothecary to make an affidavit of your illness." This was accordingly done in the following manner: "The deponent verily believes that if the said J. Balland is obliged to take his trial at the ensuing sessions, he will be in imminent danger of his life." To which the learned judge on the bench answered that he verily believed so too. The trial was ordered to proceed immediately.

What I Know of Farming.—The last joke at the expense of H. G. reports that "in an agricultural essay on tobacco, he asserts that the fine cut will not ripen well unless the tinfoil is stripped from the growing bud early in the spring, and that plug tobacco ought to be knocked off the trees with clubs instead of being picked off with the hand." It may be proper to say in this connection that there is some doubt of the truth of the foregoing.

Paper or Gunpowder. A Georgia colored lyceum discussed the question, "Which is the most useful, paper or gunpowder?" The debate was closed by a disputant who spoke as follows: "Mr. President—'Spose dar was a bar out dar at the door, and you was to go dar and shake de paper at him, you'd see what de bar would do. But jes shoot a cannon at him and mark de result. I calls for de question." The President forthwith decided in favor of powder.

An aged clergyman in New Hampshire read a sermon before his ministerial association, bearing the title of "A Plea for Dumb animals." One of the brethren playfully remarked, that all the jackasses in the country ought to thank Father M—— for his sermon. The author, turning to the critic, said, "I am glad that I have *one* appreciative hearer."

An Epistolary Gem.—The following, we are assured, is a *verbatim* copy of a letter recently received by a schoolmaster in the north from a householder in the neighborhood:—"Cur, ass, you are a man of no legs, I wish to enter my son in your skull." The obscurity and seeming offensiveness of this address disappear on translation. What was intended to be written was, "Sir, as you are a man of knowledge, I wish to enter my son at your school."

☞ The other day, while the rain was pouring in torrents, a countryman was going up the street, vainly trying to protect his umbrella under his coat. "Why don't you open your umbrella, man?" asked a passer-by. "A new umbrella in such a rain as this! Why, you must be mad!" replied the man, as he got the contents of a water-spout down his neck.

☞ Cochise, the Apache Indian chief, is pictured as a tall and finely-formed man, and except the long and deep furrows across his forehead, gives very little indication of age. His hair in intensely black, his face smooth and slightly ornamented with yellow ochre. His mouth is splendidly formed and flexible, his nose prominent, and his eyes express no ferocity. The whole expression of his countenance is pleasant, and one looks in vain for a glance of that ferocity which has so long been attributed to him.

YESTERNIGHT.

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST.
BY MARIE S. LADD.

Yesternight the old year died,
Slow and solemn was its leaving,
O'er its loss I long sat grieving;
All its little pains and pleasures
To be buried like lid treasures.

Musing only yesternight,
Sat we 'round the hearth in quiet,
Pondering on this life's grim fiat—
Death, and the unknown condition
Following on the strange transition.

While the year was going out
I rehearsed its pleasures o'er,
And its pulses moving slower,
Beat their time throbs to the appearing
Of the angel that was nearing.

Chanting o'er the old year's praise,
"Change brings with it gloom forever,"
Sighed I, "can a summer ever
Fill the ear with such glad singing,
Through the leafy woodland ringing?"

And in sadness for the year—
Can so much of joy be ours,
'Mong another summer's flowers,
Clustering leaves and clinging mosses?"
Sighed I, counting still our losses.

Still the year was going out,
As replied one of our number—
"Gloomy thoughts our hopes will cumber,
Till our hearts with weary sighing,
All so solemn is its dying.

"But the New Year in its birth,
Comes unto us like a maiden—
Fair, and with her arms o'er laden
With fresh gifts of joy and blessing,
And we yield to her caressing.

"In the New Year coming in,
Last year's hopes may find fruition;
If we give the guest admission
With a welcome brave and tender,
Much of good it may engender.

"Crosses we may lightly bear,
And athwart our way may glinter,
Through its summer and its winter
Joys so lasting, that by gleaning
Only can we know their meaning."

Then, so bravely, yesternight,
I looked forth into the morrow,
Saw I not its pain or sorrow,
Looking for the good to reach us,
And the lessons it should teach us.

JUST SEW.

Lady Visitor.—"You know what is meant by saying you are dust?"

Child.—"No, m'm, please I don't."

Curate.—"Pooh, pooh!—you know your body is made—"

Child.—"Oh, yes, sir! Mrs. Pepper, the dressmaker, made my body, but I did the skirt myself."

JUANITA;

OR, MY ADVENTURES IN MEXICO.

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST,

BY T. J. CHAMBERS.

CHAPTER I.

SURROUNDED BY PERILS.

The swift darkness of a tropical night was falling around me. Already the deep hollows and ravines were shrouded in impenetrable gloom, and the shadows were creeping steadily up the mountain side. I bent forward and gently patted my horse's neck to encourage him.

"Steady, old fellow, steady!" I spoke aloud. "The road we have to travel is confoundedly rough, but by patience and perseverance we may get along safely."

The horse, if he comprehended me, gave no sign. As he was a stupid Mexican animal, it is not probable that he understood the English tongue. The only good qualities he possessed were firmness and endurance. The amount of stubbornness in him was apparently unlimited.

I was a young New Orleans merchant, travelling in Mexico for business and pleasure combined. I had left a large town early in the morning, expecting to reach a place some fifty miles distant by sunset; but missing my way at one point, and my horse refusing to move any faster than suited his own notions, I was delayed several hours, and darkness overtook me while I was still a considerable distance from my destination, and in one of the wildest and most dangerous regions in all Mexico. The forests I knew swarmed with wild beasts, and the mountains were said to be infested with brigands—desperate men, who had no respect for the property or the lives of others. I had a considerable sum of money with me, and although I was well armed, I could not help feeling uncomfortable when I thought of the dangers with which I was surrounded.

The road which I had been following was a mere mountain path, often barely wide enough to allow a horse to pass. It now wound around a cliff, and I could see, even in the darkness, that should my horse stumble, I should, in all probability, be thrown over a fearful precipice, and dashed to pieces on the rocks a hundred feet below. Not relishing the idea of such a death, I dismounted cautiously, and led the animal along the narrow pass.

The short twilight soon faded entirely away, and the night was very dark. The path which I followed was not shaded by trees, and the stars gave sufficient light to enable me to get along safely.

From the forests around me all manner of strange noises proceeded. The screaming of panthers and wild cats, the screeching of birds, and the croaking of innumerable frogs, made up a concert that was novel and lively, if not agreeable. Any one who has never spent a night in a tropical forest, can form no just conception of the strange and unearthly noises which make the hours of darkness hideous.

Holding my wary little horse by the bridle, I continued slowly along the dangerous path. Suddenly, perhaps, two rods in front of me, a wild, terrible howl or scream rang out through the evening air. I knew at once what it meant—it was the cry of a panther, the animal most dreaded in American forests. He seldom attacks man, however, unless goaded by hunger. I grasped my revolver in my hand and pressed forward. I had not gone far, when the animal gave utterance to another scream, long, loud, and inexpressibly mournful. I saw his eyes glowing like coals of fire, but a few steps before me. My horse shivering with fright, gave a mad plunge and disappeared over the cliff into the yawning chasm below.

I stood alone on the narrow ledge with the infuriated panther before me. I could see in the dim light that his long, lithe form was crouched for a spring. I raised my revolver, and aiming at the brute's glaring eyes, fired. The creature gave an awful cry, not unlike a woman's scream, and bounding into the air, fell almost at my feet, where it struggled for a moment and then rolled over the precipice.

I uttered an exclamation of thankfulness for my narrow escape. But my situation was still very uncomfortable. My horse, my only companion, was gone; I was lost in the mountains, surrounded by savage beasts, and for all I knew, by savage men. I pressed forward as rapidly as was possible, holding my trusty revolver in my hand. I had not gone far ere the figure of a man leaped down from a rock above me, and stopped in the path a few steps ahead. I suspected the fellow's character, and resolved to fight rather than give up my purse. As I drew nearer, the man presented a pistol, and said in a deep, coarse voice in the Spanish language:

"Halt, or you are a dead man!"

I deemed it the most prudent course to stop and parley with the bandit a little. As I could speak the Spanish language fluently, I had no trouble in making myself understood.

"What is your object, senor, in halting a peaceable traveller," I said.

"You'll find out soon enough," answered the fellow roughly. "I know you carry a large sum of money about you, and I am determined to have it."

"What if I refuse to give it up?" I asked, watching him closely.

"Then you die like a dog—and your body will be thrown over the rocks there to feed the wolves. There is no use in talking, senor; you must hand over the gold at once—or I will put a ball through your head."

"Will you? I think not!" I said, raising my revolver and firing; but to my astonishment I missed my mark, and the fellow remained uninjured. Quick as thought he threw himself upon me and bore me to the ground. I struggled desperately—but the brigand was a giant in size, and more than a match for me. He held me securely and I saw him draw a glittering stiletto from his belt.

At this moment several men came running towards us, and a flickering lantern cast a ghastly light over the scene.

"What are you doing, Gomez?" yelled one of the new comers—a large, dark-bearded man. "Put down that knife instantly. Do you not know that it is against my orders to kill, except in self-defence."

"I know it captain; and I am only acting in self-defence. The villain fired at me, and would have killed me, had his aim been good. You must have heard the shot."

"We did—and came at once to see what was going on. You must not kill the scoundrel, although he deserves death. We will take him alive to the cave—and if we can make nothing out of him, we will dispatch him quietly after awhile."

"Curse him!" muttered Gomez, clutching my throat, "I will have his life yet."

"Will you obey me or not?" roared the captain of the brigands, glaring furiously at the refractory Gomez.

The fellow released me with reluctance; and I was lifted to my feet by two or three of the party.

"Now," said the captain, standing before me and holding a pistol close to my head, "hand over your money and valuables, or I will blow your stubborn head to atoms!"

I knew it would be folly to try to resist a dozen armed and desperate men, so I quietly delivered my money, to the amount of several hundred dollars, into the captain's hands.

"Now your arms," continued he, "and your watch—I know you have a watch, and we must have it.

"We will now retire to the cave. Gomez, secure this fellow's hands, lest he try to escape, or hurt some one.

"You have everything I have of any value; why not let me go at once?" I said, not caring to visit the retreat of the brigands. "You will gain nothing by detaining me longer.

"Don't you think your friends will be willing to pay something to save your life, and set you free again?"

"I have no friends here," I replied. "I am a native of the United States."

"That may be true, and it may not," sneered the captain. "At anyrate, we will take you with us, and if you are of no further use, we will knock you on the head, and throw your body out for the wolves to breakfast on."

I said nothing, knowing that I was helpless in their hands. Two brawny fellows grasped my arms, and I was hurried along in the midst of the villainous company. After a half-hour's travelling in this manner, up hill and down, over rocks, torrents, and through a dense wood, we arrived at the entrance of a cave. Here I was blindfolded, and led into the subterranean abode of the bandits. At last my captors halted, took the bandage from my eyes, and I was allowed to look upon the wild and picturesque scene. At least twenty rough, long-haired men were assembled in a large square room. Various articles of plunder were strewn around. In one corner a fireplace was constructed, in which a bright fire was blazing. Two or three female figures were bending over this, evidently preparing the evening meal.

"Hurry up, granny!" said the captain, in a loud voice. "Hurry up, I say! The men are terribly hungry, I can tell you—and I myself have a ferocious appetite."

"Supper will soon be ready, captain," answered the woman addressed as granny, an old, withered, hideous-looking hag. The second woman was a handsome middle-aged negress; the third was a young girl, not more than seventeen, with one of the most beautiful faces I had ever seen. I was greatly surprised, as I little expected to discover beauty and innocence in a robber's cave; and I watched the girl with a persistency that attracted the notice of one of the bandits.

"What are you looking at, senor?" he demanded with a horrible leer.

"I was looking at that beautiful girl standing yonder. Who is she?"

"Captain's daughter," answered the man, sententiously.

I said no more, but continued to regard the maiden attentively. I noticed, with some surprise, that though her eyes were large, dark, and dreamy, and full of the fire and passion of the South, her skin was very fair, and her glossy hair of a light-brown shade. The robber chief was almost as swarthy as an Indian, and I could see no resemblance whatever between them.

The meal was soon ready, and the men attacked the provisions with the voracity of a pack of famished wolves. While the bandits were absorbed in eating, the beautiful girl silently approached the spot where I was seated, with my hands still securely bound. She stopped before me, and bent her soft, melancholy eyes upon my face. I gazed upon her with respectful admiration, but did not speak.

"Senor," she said, in sweet, tremulous tones, "are you a Mexican?"

"I am not," I returned. "I am a native of the United States."

"I thought as much," she continued. "Have you any friends here who will be able to secure your release from this gloomy den?"

"I have not a friend or relative, to my knowledge, in all Mexico."

"God pity you, then; I fear you will never return to your home. You are in the hands of lawless men, who will think nothing of taking your life and tossing your body into some dark hollow for wild beasts to prey upon. I pity you, senor."

"And why is it, gentle maiden," I said, "that you take such an interest in my fate? Are these wild-men, who regard not the laws of God nor man, your people, your kindred?"

"Alas! I fear so," she answered sadly.

"Have you then no positive knowledge on the subject? Is not the captain of the band your father?"

"So I have been told, so he himself declares, and yet there are moments when I cannot believe it."

"But surely you have some reasons for your doubts?" I said, deeply interested.

"I have faint recollections of leading a different life when I was a child—of beautiful houses and loving parents—but it may be all imagination."

"Believe me it is not," I said warmly. "Will you tell me your name, my fair friend?"

"Juanita," she answered. "But good-bye, senor, I must leave you. We have already talked too long."

She gave me a sweet smile and glided away. I was greatly astonished and excited by what she had told me. I felt certain that she was not the bandit's child, but perhaps the daughter of some wealthy nobleman, stolen and detained in the hope of a large ransom. The maiden's melancholy, beautiful face made a deep impression on me, and I resolved to learn more of her if I possibly could.

After the brigands had partaken of a hearty meal, the majority of them threw themselves on the floor to sleep; but the captain and two or three others approached me.

"Well, senor, would you like something to eat?" asked the leader, smiling.

"A trifle would not be disagreeable to me," I answered.

"Carlos, bring the caballero a plate of bread and meat, with some wine; he shall not complain of our lack of hospitality."

The cord that bound my hands being loosened a little, I partook liberally of the very good fare placed before me. When I had finished, the captain turned to the men and said:

"Now, Gomez, you and Carlos show the gentleman to his room. If his apartment is not very elegant, it is at least strong and secure."

Grinning maliciously, the villainous Gomez seized me roughly by the arm and hurried me away through a narrow passage, Carlos following close behind with a light. Presently he stopped in front of a massive iron-bound door, which Carlos proceeded to open with an enormous key. Gomez pushed me unceremoniously into the apartment, and closed the heavy door with a bang. I was alone in utter darkness.

"I hope you will rest well in your pleasant quarters," growled Gomez through the keyhole. "When you get out again, I think you will value your life more than your money. You are not the first one that has died a lingering death by starvation in that hole, I can tell you. Good-night."

After delivering this cheering piece of information, Gomez stamped away, and I was left to commune with my own thoughts. That they were not agreeable company the reader will readily believe; but I resolved to make the best of a bad business. Groping around the rocky walls of my dungeon, I discovered a rude couch, on which I threw myself. It was a long time ere I could compose my excited brain; but at length I sank into an uneasy sleep, and dreamed of the robber's daughter, Juanita.

(CONCLUDED NEXT WEEK.)

PEN PORTRAIT OF JEFFERSON.

By James Parton.

Jefferson was a stripling of seventeen, tall, raw-boned, freckled, and sandy-haired, when, in 1760, he came to Williamsburg from the Far West of Virginia, to enter the College of William and Mary. With his large feet and hands, his thick wrists, and prominent cheek-bones and chin, he could not have been accounted handsome or graceful. He is described, however, as a fresh, bright, healthy-looking youth, as straight as a gun-barrel, sinewy and strong, with that alertness of movement which comes of early familiarity with saddle, gun, canoe, minuet, and country-dance—that sure, elastic tread and ease of bearing which we still observe in country-bred lads who have been exempt from the ruder toils of agriculture, while enjoying, in full measure, the freedom and the sports of the country. His teeth, too, were perfect, which alone redeems a countenance destitute of other charm; his eyes, which were of hazel-gray, were beaming and expressive; and his demeanor gave assurance of a gentle heart and sympathetic, inquisitive mind.

Such lads, eager and unformed, still come to college from honest country homes, in regions where agriculture is carried on upon a scale that allows some leisure to the farmer's family, some liberality of expenditure, books, music, a tincture of art, and hospitable habits. How welcome, how dear, to instructors worthy of them, are such unhackneyed minds in bodies unimpaired.—*Atlantic Monthly.*

☞ Two of the Red Stockings have joined a choir. One of them officiates as short-stop on the organ, and the other sings third base. All their interest is concentrated on the Tuneful Nine.

Answers to Correspondents.

Additions to Clubs.—A correspondent asks "if additions can be made to clubs at the same rate." Yes.

To Contributors.—All manuscripts sent to us should have the price marked upon them if any is desired. Writers of no literary reputation should be satisfied at first if a good field is afforded them to display their talents and gain a name. We do not guarantee the safe return of manuscript, but endeavor to return it safely when desired, and when the requisite stamps are sent. Articles may be good of their kind, and not be suitable for our purposes. Experience and popular writers will find us ever ready to give their articles prompt attention.

K. H. Q., (Indiana,) writes: "Allow me to intrude on your kindness. 1st. What is the meaning and origin of the expression, 'Better fifty years of Europe than a cycle of Cathay?' 2d. What is meant by 'Heaping Pelion upon Ossa?' and how is the former word pronounced? 3d. Can you give me any information about 'Twelfth Night?' if so, let's hear it. 4th. What is the best work on Anatomy? 5th. Is it proper for a gentleman to wear a cap to his own wedding, and are not gloves considered indispensible to an outfit for that occasion? 6th. When a gentleman calls on the lady to whom he is engaged, and does not say a word for half an hour at a time, what would you infer? (and they had not quarrelled either.) 7th. When does the gentleman present the wedding-ring, at the time of, or *after* the ceremony? Am I too lengthy? I love the dear old Post better each year, as also the Friend. Expect to hear from me with a club, though I am quite too busy to send it just now. If I see my beautiful December Friend for a Prospectus Copy, will its worthy publisher send me another? They get too much soiled to bind with the volume, after being so much handled." We will be happy to do so, and thank you for your kind wishes and efforts in behalf of the Post. Permit us in return to congratulate you on the happy occasion, which we should infer from the tenor of your letter is rapidly approaching, if it be not already past before this sees the light. The quotation in your first question is from Tennyson's "Locksley Hall." It is intended to contrast the rapid progress and the energy of Europe with the stagnant condition of the civilization of Cathay, or China; and indicates that there is as much real life in fifty years of the former as in a cycle of the latter. 2d. In the old Greek myth of the battle of the Giants against the Gods, the former are fabled to have heaped Mount Ossa upon Mount Pelion in order to scale Heaven; that is, to reach the summit of Mount Olympus, metaphorically it means to heap difficulty on difficulty, trouble upon trouble. Pelion is pronounced in three syllables, accent upon the first. 3d. Twelfth Night is the feast of the Epiphany, which occurs twelve days after Christmas. It was formerly celebrated by what was called the Bean King's Festival. A bean was hidden in a large cake, and to whoever it fell, on cutting, he was declared king for the ensuing year. 4th. There are many good works on the subject, of which we cannot select one as undeniably the best. 5th. It is certainly not usual, nor would it be considered the correct thing in this part of the country, to appear with a cap or without gloves at one's own wedding. We know not what the social code may require in Indiana. 6th. We should consider either that he could think of nothing to say worthy the occasion, or that he was so lost in bliss as to be beyond language. Perhaps, on the whole, it would be best that he should remain silent, as such silence often indicates an unpleasant frame of mind, and is it not better to say nothing than to say something disagreeable? 7th. He presents the ring during the ceremony. If he does not know when the minister will prompt him when to do so, so that there need be no confusion.

Mamie Anon (Natchez, Miss.) "Please answer a constant reader and admirer of the Post the following: 1st. What religious doctrine did General George Washington and the majority of the other Presidents profess? 2d. What do you think of my handwriting? Is it sufficiently good for business?" Gen. Washington attended the Episcopal Church, having a pew in Christ Church in this city. Of the other Presidents, Thomas Jefferson said to those who inquired his religion, "Observe my life. If that is good, my religion cannot be bad." We do not call to mind at present the religious beliefs of the other Presidents. Your handwriting is fair and will answer for business.

Lillian D. (Morrow Co., O.) writes: "Will the Post be kind enough to answer the following questions? 1st. Does the hair grow after death? and, if so, what is the cause of it? 2d. What can I do for my complexion? My face is covered with little pimples with a black point, by some called worms. What will cure them? 3d. Where can I get a book of etiquette for young ladies? 4th. In writing letters is it considered impolite to write on the last page? Please answer through your excellent paper, and oblige a constant reader." 1st. The hair does grow after death, often for a very considerable period. We can give no special reason for it, except that the hair, in its mode of growth, resembles vegetables; and is lower in organization than most other animal substances. Its growth then after death may partake of this vegetable character, each hair being like a plant rooted in the decaying organism. 2d. To wash the face with buttermilk is considered by some useful in such a case. But the surest remedy is to strike at the root of the disease by reforming your mode of life. Deny yourself for awhile fat or rich food, of any kind, particularly pork, and take plenty of exercise in the open air, and you will probably not have so much trouble in future with pimples, unless they are constitutional. 3d. Any bookseller can provide you. If there is none in your locality, write to some book store in the nearest city. 4th. There is no impoliteness in writing on the last page of your paper, if you have more to say than three pages will hold. We think it decidedly preferable to the economical and vexatious custom of crossing, which many young ladies employ.

Miss Z. L. (Bedford, O.) writes: "If you think it suitable for your correspondents' column, I should like to have you tell me something of the English sovereigns between William of Orange and Victoria. How were they related to him and to her? No history accessible to me, here in the country, gives anything later than the reign of William." Anne, who succeeded William, was the second daughter of James II. George I. was the son of the Electoral Hanover and of Sophia, granddaughter of James I. He began what is known as the Hanoverian line. George II. was his son. George III. was the grandson of George II. George IV. son of George III. William IV. was the third son of George III. Victoria is the daughter of the Duke of Kent, the fourth son of George III.

L. A. S. (Addison, Me.) wishes to know through the correspondents' column whether there was a copy of the Declaration of Independence sent to the British government, "Bold as were our forefathers, none of them were so foolhardy as to brand the British lion in his den, with so *rebellious* a document. It was sufficient for all practical purposes to publish it to the world.

C. T. (Equinunk, Pa.) writes: "I take the liberty of inquiring what has become of Mr. George R. Graham? Please answer in the correspondents' column." We believe he is now living in New York, and following the business of a Broker.

A. P. D. (Philada.) writes: "Would you please answer the following? When a writer sends a piece to the Post, or any other paper, and gets paid for it, has he a right to send the same piece to another paper, receiving pay from that also? I know a person who did it, and when I spoke about it said, 'I have a right to do what I please with my own article.' Please let me know in your correspondents' column." He would have such a right were it his own article, but it ceases to be his own when he has sold it. If a man sells the product of his hands to one person it ceases to belong to him, and why should not the same rule apply to products of the mind? He would not be justified in even republishing it without pay, against the wish of the first publisher.

J. A. (Point Pleasant, O.,) says: "Will you please inform me through your paper, which is the lowest city in the world, below the level of the ocean? Also, how do you pronounce New Orleans?" Probably some city on the Caspian Sea may claim to this distinction. Of those, the only one of any importance is the Russian city of Astrakan, at the mouth of the Volga. The Dead Sea is some 1,300 feet lower than the Caspian, but it has no city on its borders. The ancient city of Sodom, which stood near its banks, may perhaps claim to have been the lowest city, both physically and morally, that ever existed. Pronounce New Or-leans, accent on first syllable.

Unquiet writes: "May I trouble you, who have often instructed me in other matters, to answer the following questions? You will oblige me very much by doing so. About four years ago a lady friend of mine became engaged to be married. Everything went on well until within a very short time of the wedding, when her health began to suffer. The consequence was his people interfered and he gave her up, giving as his reason that she was too delicate to be any one's wife. She loved him dearly, and for six months after lay at the point of death, brought on, the doctor said, by his conduct. This happened four years ago. Now she is rosy and healthy, and this man wants her to take him back. Now what I want to know is this—What do you think of such a man? And if you were in her place what would you do? Would you be willing to take a man for better or worse who was willing to throw you off when you needed all his care, as did my friend?" When the lady herself asks our advice, it will be time to give it. We do not like friends or acquaintances asking us questions about other people's business. It might be very unpleasant to the lady in question to have the subject canvassed in our columns. "Unquiet" should remember that text of Scripture which says—"Study to be quiet, and mind your own business"—or words to that effect, as extemporo preachers say.

Subscriber writes: "Please inform a subscriber of the Post, through your columns, how a letter must be directed to reach Mrs. Gaines, the lady who contested a suit with the city of New Orleans." It need only be directed to New Orleans; as the lady is sufficiently well known there for her address to be known to the post office clerks.

Amy—Your poem will appear in the Lady's Friend for February, 1872, and the magazine will be sent when you give your address.

Ambrien (Camden, New Jersey,) writes: "I have often thought of writing to you, and telling you how much I like your paper. It is among my first recollections. I have still one copy of the year 1800—a very different looking sheet from that we receive every week now. I like it better than ever, since you have enlarged it. The Correspondents' column is a great pleasure to me. I always read it before anything else, and I have learned many things worth knowing from it. And now, like all the rest of my sex, I am going to ask questions. I do not have good health, and have been recommended to use exercise. I should like to learn to ride. I have heard of riding-schools for ladies in Philadelphia, but do not know where to find them. Can you tell me of a good riding-school in Philadelphia? If not, perhaps you know where I can go to hear of one. Please answer in your correspondents' column if convenient, and accept the ultimate thanks of an admirer." We are glad to find that our correspondent has derived pleasure and benefit from our efforts to please and to instruct. In answer to her question, we may say that Mr. Craig has, we believe, a Riding School in West Philadelphia—and is a very capable teacher.

J. B., (Nashville, Tenn.,) writes: "Who was King Arthur, concerning whom Tennyson and Bulwer and others, have written so many poems. Over what country did he reign, and at what period? And are all the poetical stories told concerning him and his Knights founded on fact? Is Merlin an historical character, and the Round Table something that had a real existence? I have often wondered concerning these points, and not being deeply read in history, have been unable to set myself right. You will greatly oblige by answering the above questions." King Arthur was probably a famous King of Britain in ancient times, around whom centred many of the romantic fables of the middle ages. So with Merlin and the Knights of the Round Table, they probably are in a great degree the coinage of the brain.

[Several letters are held over to be answered in our next.]

RIDDLER.

RIDDLE. NO. 1.

I am neither fish, flesh, nor fowl—yet I frequently stand upon one leg; and if you behead me, I stand upon two; what is more strange, if you again decapitate me I stand upon four—and I think you are related to me if you do not now recognize me?

RIDDLE. NO. 2.

Legs have I got, but seldom walk;
I backbite all, yet never talk.

ASTRONOMICAL PROBLEM.

"Five months in this year have five Sundays—something that does not happen but once in half a century."—*Sel. Rec. Post, Oct. 21, 1871, p. 7, Items of Interest.*

The statement in the above paragraph is incorrect. How many other years of the present century had five months containing five Sundays each? and how many more will have a like number of months containing five Sundays?

ARTEMAS MARTIN,
M'Kean, Erie Co., Pa.

☞ An Answer is requested.

CONUNDRUMS.

☞ What length ought a lady's dress to be? Ans.—A little above two feet.

☞ If a nut could speak, what would it say? Ans.—None of your jaw.

☞ Why was William the Conqueror of no sex? Ans.—Because he was not a female *nor-man.*

☞ Why is a woman who loves a husband that chastises her, like a drunkard? Ans.—Because she loves her licker (liquor.)

☞ Why is a hungry man waiting for his breakfast, willing to be a martyr? Ans.—Because he longes for the *stead.*

☞ What is the difference between a tannery and alabaster? Ans.—One hides the tan, and the other tans the hide.

☞ What lover-like speech would an empty purse make if it could speak? Ans.—You'll find no change in me.

☞ Why is a judge's nose like the middle of the earth? Ans.—Because it's the center of gravity.

☞ Why was Blackstone like an fresh vegetable? Ans.—Because he was a common tator.

☞ Why is a commercial traveller whose "walk in life" is selling eggs, certain to be successful? Ans.—Because he shows a good egg-sample from egg-sell-ent motives?

[Worthy man! May his samples never become eggstinckt!]

☞ Why is an egg overdone, like an egg underdone? Ans.—Because it's hardly done.

☞ By what female name would an egg—awfully stale one this is—object to be called? Ans.—Addie-laid.

☞ Why ought socks to be the smoothest birds known? Ans.—Because they always have a comb about them.

☞ If an egg could speak—more stale eggs—what preserve would it name? Ans.—It would say, "I'm mamma-lad!"

[Considering how tight they pack the eggs in straw, we should have thought it might have alluded to straw-berry-jam also.]

☞ Which one of the Seven Wonders of the World are railway engines like? Ans.—The coal-horses of roads (Colossus of Rhodes.—(Fearful!)

☞ Why is a sloop emblematic of the past and future? Ans.—Because its afore-and-after.

☞ Why is a dead doctor like a dead duck? Ans.—Because they have both done quacking!

[Of course we know what inference to dead-duckt from this.]

☞ Why are people who have nothing to be proud of but their pedigree like potatoes? Ans.—Because the only good thing belonging to them is underground.

ANSWERS TO LAST.

RIDDLE—Semi-circle. RIDDLE—Big bear.

RECEIPTS.

Suet Dumplings (plain).—2 cups fine bread-crumbs, soaked in a very little milk, 1 cup beef suet, freed from strings, and powdered, 4 eggs, whites and yolks separated, and beaten very light, 1 tablespoonful sugar, 1 teaspoonful cream-tartar, sifted into the flour. Half teaspoonful soda dissolved in boiling water. 1 teaspoonful of salt. Enough milk to mix into a stiff paste. Make into large balls with floured hands; but into dumpling cloths dipped into hot water and floured inside; leave room to swell, and tie the string very tightly. Boil three quarters of an hour. Serve hot with sauce.

A Molasses Sippet.—Make a thick slice of very nice toast, evenly browned on both sides, but not the least burnt. Lay it in a pint bowl, and pour over it a small half pint of the best West India molasses, having stirred into the molasses a heaped tablespoonful of ground ginger. Mix the molasses with half a pint of hot water, and pour it over the toast. Cover it with a plate for a few minutes, and eat while warm, previous to going to bed. This is a wholesome palatable supper for an invalid and may be continued as long as the patient continues to like it. It is always a good winter supper for children. The ginger must on no account be omitted. If the molasses has turned sour, stir in a salt-spoonful of soda.

Indian Pudding.—Two quarts of boiling milk, with Indian meal enough to make a thin batter; stir in while boiling hot. Add sugar, allspice, and salt to your taste; also a teacup of cold milk. Bake five hours in a moderate oven.

Apple Pudding.—Take 10 eggs, beat them very light; add 1 pint stewed and strained apples, stir in quarter pound of butter, the juice and grated rind of 2 lemons; sugar to your taste. Bake this.

Sauce for the Above.—To quarter pound of butter, 8 teaspoonfuls white sugar, 1 egg, 1 glass of wine; but all into a nice saucepan, and beat well together. Set it on the fire, and stir constantly a few minutes.